NEW ENGLAND

CLIFTON JOHNSON

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/newenglanditsnei0000clif

NEW ENGLAND AND ITS NEIGHBORS

The MMCo

SPRINGTIME IN AN OLD GARDEN

NEW ENGLAND AND ITS NEIGHBORS

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY CLIFTON JOHNSON

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

New York 1923

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO. LIMITED

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Copyright, 1902
by The Macmillan Company

Set up and electrotyped September, 1902. Reprinted November, 1902; March, 1912.

Electrotyped
and
Printed
at the
Norwood Press
Norwood, Mass.

Contents

		Page
I.	Midwinter in Valley Forge	1
II.	When the White Mountains are White	24
III.	A Ruin beside Lake Champlain	52
IV.	In the Adirondacks	70
V.	The Home of Fenimore Cooper	106
VI.	An Historic Town in Connecticut	124
VII.	A Jaunt on Long Island	147
VIII.	Life on a Green Mountain Top	168
IX.	Down in Maine	196
X.	Along the Juniata	215
XI.	Dwellers among the Catskills	240
XII.	A Canal-boat Voyage on the Hudson	264
XIII.	The Autumn Cattle Show	287
XIV.	Cape Cod Folks	313

List of Illustrations

	Page
Springtime in an Old Garden . . . . *Frontispiece*	
In Valley Forge	1
Valley Forge Pond . . . . . *Facing*	4
The Site of the Old Forge	8
One of the Bridges over "Valley Crick"	9
The Schuylkill at Valley Forge	13
A Valley Forge Footpath . . . . . *Facing*	18
The Entrance to the Headquarters Mansion	21
The House which was Washington's Headquarters . .	23
A Woodland Teamster	24
A Load of Logs on a Forest Roadway . . *Facing*	26
Work at a Logging-camp Landing . . . *Facing*	33
The Choppers	35
A Woodsman's Rocking-chair	37
A Mountain Ox-team	40
In the Sleeping Apartment	43
A Corner of the Camp Kitchen	46
A Scaler . . . . . *Facing*	48
A Logging-camp Dwelling	51
Considering his Neighbor's Fields	52
In Crown Point Village	54

		Page
Mending the Pasture Fence	*Facing*	56
A Lake Champlain Ferry	*Facing*	59
Rhubarb		61
Ticonderoga Ruins		65
The Pasture in which stand the Old Fortifications		69
A Fisherman		70
An Adirondack Farmer	*Facing*	77
Shelling Seed Corn		80
Bringing in the Cows after their Day's Grazing		82
Picking up Chips		85
The Kitchen Door of a Log House	*Facing*	89
Sowing Oats		93
Spinning Yarn for the Family Stockings		96
A Home in a Valley		99
A Roadside Chat		105
On Cooperstown Street		106
Looking toward the Town from an Eastern Hillslope		109
The Margin of the Lake	*Facing*	111
Putting on a Fresh Coat of Paint		113
Getting Ready to plant his Garden	*Facing*	115
Spring Work in a Farm Field		117
The Monument on the Site of Otsego Hall	*Facing*	119
The Graves of J. Fenimore Cooper and his Wife		123
Setting out the House-plants		124
Saybrook Street		125
In a Back Yard		128
Ploughing out for Potatoes		130

	Page
A Roadway on the Saybrook Outskirts	131
Drawing a Bucket of Water	*Facing* 134
In the Old Cemetery	137
Cleaning up the Back Yard	*Facing* 141
The Seaward Marshlands	146
Starting the Garden Parsnips	147
A Long Island Stile	*Facing* 149
On Easthampton Common	152
The "Home, Sweet Home" House	155
An Old-fashioned Sitting Room	159
A Toll-gate on a Seven Cent Road	161
Making Fence Posts	*Facing* 165
A Windmiller	166
Along Shore at Sag Harbor	167
Tinkering the Road	168
At the Schoolhouse Door	171
A Trout Stream	174
The Fiddler	*Facing* 179
Grandpa gives the Boys some Good Advice	181
The Rain-water Barrel	184
Taking Care of the Baby	*Facing* 191
The Lonely Little Church	193
A Home-made Lumber Wagon	195
A Mount Desert Well	196
A Lobster-pot	199
A Home on the Shore	201
Summer Calm	*Facing* 202

		Page
The Post-office Piazza	*Facing*	206
An Old Schoolroom		210
A Moonlit Evening		214
The Home Porch		215
The Dooryard Fence		218
After the Day's Work	*Facing*	220
Typical Outbuildings		224
A Grist-mill		225
Making Apple-butter		227
Childhood Treasures		230
Farm Market Wagons		232
One of the Street Pumps	*Facing*	237
On a Village Sidewalk		238
The Juniata		239
Old-fashioned Churning		240
Digging Potatoes in a Weedy Field		242
A Home on the Mountain Side		245
The Buckwheat Thresher — Fair Weather or Foul?		247
A Morning Wash at the Back Door	*Facing*	251
On the Way to the Barn to help Milk	*Facing*	254
Making Soft Soap	*Facing*	257
Binding Indian Corn		260
Considering		263
Trading with a Bumboat		264
The Call to Dinner	*Facing*	267
Visiting		272
Drawing Water		274

	Page
Two Canal-boat Captains	*Facing* 277
The Steamer dragging the Tow	281
House-cleaning Time	*Facing* 282
Arriving in New York	286
The "Nigger" Target	287
Children Sightseers	291
Without the Gate	293
The Stage from the Neighboring Town	294
The Cavalcade of Oxen	299
On the Grounds	301
To Buy or Not to Buy	*Facing* 303
Cooking Apparatus at the Rear of the Eating Tents . .	307
The Pounding-machine	*Facing* 309
Five Cents a Throw at the Dolls	312
A Village Sign	313
Anchoring his Haystacks	316
An Autumn Corn-field	319
A Cranberry Picker	321
Harvest on a Cranberry Bog	322
In Provincetown	*Facing* 325
Looking over the Cod Lines	327
An Old Wharf	*Facing* 330
Public Buildings on the Hilltop	331
A Cape Cod Roadway	333
The Mowers on the Marshes	335

Introductory Note

This book is primarily a study of the rural aspects of national life in the several New England states and the neighboring states of New York and Pennsylvania. The historic or literary background that some of the chapters have is only incidental, and in no case is introduced for its own sake. I have sometimes dealt with sections that are famous and much travelled, but it is their humbler features that I love best, and it is these I linger over in my pictures and my descriptions. Wherever I go, the characteristic and picturesque phases of the local farm environment always appeal strongly to me, and in what I have written I have tried to convey to others the same interest I have felt, and at the same time have endeavored to give a clear and truthful impression of the reality.

Clifton Johnson.

Hadley, Massachusetts.

New England and its Neighbors

I

MIDWINTER IN VALLEY FORGE

In Valley Forge

MY impression had been that Valley Forge was a wild glen, high among the mountains, where winter frosts and snows held unrelaxing sway for many long, dark months every year. But in reality its situation is neither lofty nor remote, and the rigors of the cold are not nearly what they are in the states farther north. Comparatively little snow falls, and often there is not a week's sleighing the winter through.

The Valley is only twenty-three miles from Philadelphia, with which it has direct connection by a railroad that skirts along the Schuylkill River. When you alight

from the train you find a diminutive station, and, on the opposite side of the tracks, a freight-shed and an ancient, broken-roofed mill. But immediately beyond the old mill is the colonial mansion which was Washington's headquarters, and beyond that lies the village — a straggling little place, scattered along several diverging roads. A good-sized stream courses northward through the midst of the hamlet to join the Schuylkill, and beside it are two mills. These, like the one adjoining the station, are vacant and crumbling. The smaller of the two is mostly constructed of wood. The other is of brick — a great barrack of a building, painted white, with tiny-paned windows of days gone by. Near it stand some rows of dilapidated mill cottages gradually dropping to pieces; and, taken altogether, a melancholy air of industrial ruin hangs over the Valley.

A massive dam stems the stream above the big mill, but the water-power is in no way utilized, and the manufacturing of the present is confined to a rackabones structure on the western outskirts of the village, where a stone-crusher reduces to sand a peculiar rock from an upland quarry. About five car-loads of sand are turned out daily and shipped away to foundries, for use in making moulds.

My acquaintance with Valley Forge began in the early evening of a day in February. I walked from the station to the village and looked about vainly in the

dusk for a hotel. Finally I appealed to a passer, who pointed out one close by. It was girded around by ornamental piazzas and surmounted by a very fancy cupola, and I had mistaken it for some gentleman's villa. Moreover, its spacious grounds were adorned with fine trees that gave a touch of the idyllic, though the lager-beer signs which their trunks supported were something of an offset to this impression. Winter visitors are rare, and I took the landlord by surprise. He explained apologetically that his cook had just left, and he and his father were the only persons in the house. They were going to shift for themselves until they found another cook, but if I wanted to lodge with them, he would get some neighbor to come in and help in the kitchen. I accepted the situation, and after I had disposed of my luggage I started out for a walk.

It was a pleasant, quiet night, with a half-moon high in the sky. The ground was mostly bare, and the wheeling on the frost-bound roads could hardly have been better. Only under shadowed banks and on the northward-sloping hills was there snow, though the streams, wherever the cold had a fair chance at them, were frozen tight and fast. Much of the valley was overflowed by a long, narrow pond that set back from the dam of the large upper mill. On the borders of this pond I came across a young fellow regarding the ice attentively, and I spoke to him. He had been testing the surface with his heels to see if there was

skating, and had concluded it had been too much softened by the heat of the day, but that it would harden up all right during the night. "A good many come here skating," he said — "mostly Sundays, and other days, and some nights, and daytimes, too."

I asked him what the name of the stream was, and he replied that he'd "be hanged" if he knew. He'd never heard it called anything but "the dam."

Then I inquired the name of the larger stream to the north; but he had to "be hanged" again — he'd lived here twenty years, all his life — and never heard it spoken of as anything except "the river."

This was not very encouraging, but when we continued our chat I found his information about the village itself more definite and satisfactory. Some of the people depended wholly on their little farms, but the majority of the male population were either employed at the quarry on the hill and the stone-crusher, or at a brick-yard about two miles distant; and ten or twelve of the village girls went daily by train six miles down the river to work in a cotton-mill. He told how crowds of people flocked to the Valley in the summer, some to stay several days or weeks, but mostly picnickers who came in the morning and went in the late afternoon. There were boats to let on the pond, and the summer people "rowed and fished and caught carp that weighed thirty pounds."

I mentioned that from up the hill where I had been

VALLEY FORGE POND

On the hill in the background were the most important of Washington's fortifications

before I visited the pond I had seen what looked like the lights of a town off to the northeast.

"Were the lights all in a bunch?" he asked.

"Yes," I responded.

"That's a protectory."

"A what?"

"A protectory — some big buildings where they keep boys — boys that have been bad. A lot of 'em got away last July — took the sheets off their beds and tied 'em together and shinned down on 'em from a window. They started off for Philadelphia, but they were all caught."

My companion had no overcoat on, and he began to get shivery. So he turned his collar up a little closer about his ears and said he guessed he'd go over to the store. I turned in the other direction and walked up the pond on the ice. The village lay behind me, wooded hills rose on either side, and with the moonlight glistening on the ice, the scene, in spite of its loneliness, was pleasantly romantic.

When I returned to the hotel the evening was well advanced and I soon retired. I wished afterward I had sat up later, for I had the coldest, most unsympathetic bed I have met with in all my experience. There were plenty of blankets and quilts; but the foundation was a corn-husk mattress that had apparently been absorbing frost for months, and I did not get comfortably warm all night.

In the morning one of the village women had charge of the kitchen and prepared the breakfast. I had just come down to the office when she put her head in at the door and asked, "Will yees eat now?"

The two men of the establishment rose and led the way through several cold vacant rooms and passages to the rear of the house. They themselves ate in the kitchen, but I was directed to a corner of one of the tables in the adjoining dining room. It was not a very sociable arrangement, and I liked it the less because the little stove at my elbow only succeeded in tempering the chilly atmosphere of the big apartment. Conversation was confined to a few remarks passed with the substitute cook.

"I've had to spind the biggest part of me time here this winter," she said. "The young girruls the hotel do get will not stay. It is too cowld and lonesome. They likes the city betther; and so I have to be always runnin' in to help from my house that's up here fornent the ould mill."

I noticed her house later in the morning when I was out walking. Around it was much litter and a curious conglomeration of patched-up shanties for the domestic animals, which included a lively brood of nondescript fowls and a sober family goat. All in all the place looked as if it had been transplanted bodily from the woman's native Ireland.

That visitors to the Valley were many was attested

by the numerous wayside signs warning against trespassing. These were a characteristic and predominant feature of the landscape. They were set up on posts and tacked to trees and fences everywhere and suggested a wild raid of tourists in the season. Most of them threatened you with the law, but others confined themselves to a laconic, "Keep Off!"

The day was gentle and springlike, the atmosphere full of haze and odorous of coal gas from the engines of the freight trains that were constantly throbbing and hissing along the railway. The mildness of Nature's mood made it far from easy to call up the mental picture of the hardships of that far-gone winter when Washington was there, and any sentiment of seclusion was impossible with that noisy, sulphurous railroad immediately at hand and the knowledge that it could carry me straight to the heart of Philadelphia in little more than half an hour.

I think the casual student of history fancies that Valley Forge sheltered the whole patriot army. On the contrary, only a small portion of the troops dwelt there. At the rear of Washington's headquarters the life guards were encamped, and across "Valley Crick" were General Stirling's men; but the rest of the army was over the hill eastward. The area of ground suitable for camping in the Valley itself is not large, for to the south it almost at once becomes a narrow, irregular defile hemmed in by steep slopes of loose stones.

A half mile up the ravine stood the old forge — an iron-working plant that was established long before the Revolution, and that was known in its earlier days as the Mount Joy forge. It did a flourishing business and employed many men and teams. John Potts, a Quaker, purchased it in 1757, and immediately afterward built at the mouth of the creek a flour-mill and

The Site of the Old Forge

a stout stone residence. Just before the war this dwelling and mill passed to his son Isaac, in whose possession they were when Washington made his official home in the house.

Another half mile up the Valley beyond the site of the old forge the hills cease and the road, which hitherto has been creeping along the margin of the stream, goes through a covered wooden bridge of picturesque type

and strikes off in several divisions across the rolling farmlands that sweep away as far as the eye can see. On this side of the hills all the oldest farm-houses for

One of the Bridges over "Valley Crick"

miles around were headquarters of Revolutionary generals in that dismal winter — of Lafayette, of Knox, Stirling, and others — substantial structures of stone that bid fair to last for many generations yet.

While looking about over here I met a man trudging along smoking his pipe. He wore an overcoat dyed the color of rust by long exposure to the sun and weather, and under his arm he carried a bag. I made some inquiry about the road, but he could not help me. He said he did not often come up this way. His tramping ground lay more to the south. All the farmers there knew him and let him sleep in their

barns. He made a business of gathering water-cresses in the brooks, but they had been all frozen by recent cold weather, and he could get none to fill his bag to-day.

I at length took a byway leading toward the heights, and soon was in the brushy woods, where I found the snow lying six or eight inches deep. As I approached the summit of the hills I came on the old-time intrenchments skirting around the crest of the ridges. They were not imposing, yet they were clearly marked — a ditch, and, behind it, a low, flattened embankment with a path along the top kept well trodden by sightseers. I followed this sinuous line whitened by the snow for some distance. The hilltop was very silent. At times I heard the cheerful twitter of the chickadees, and once a hound came baying through the trees, with his nose to the ground, zigzagging after a rabbit track. A hawk circled high overhead and turned its head sidewise to get a look at me, and somewhere down in the Valley a bevy of crows were cawing.

A little below the intrenchments were the heavy earthwork squares of two forts, one commanding the approaches from the south, the other from the east. An outer line of intrenchments was thrown up about a mile from those on the hills; but they lay through the cultivated farm fields and have long ago disappeared. Between the two lines of earthworks the main army was stationed, and there the soldiers put up their little log huts. On the bleak December days while these

were building and the work of fortifying was going on, the troops had no shelter save their tents. The huts were sixteen feet long, fourteen wide, and six and one-half high. They were banked up outside with earth, and the cracks between the logs were chinked with clay, while the roofs were of logs split into rude planks or slabs. The buildings were regularly arranged in streets, and each was the home of twelve men.

Every cabin had at one end a fireplace of clay-daubed logs, but, with the bare earth floor underfoot, comfort must have been well-nigh impossible. Besides, the winter is reputed to have been uncommonly cold and snowy, and the men were very inadequately clothed and fed. Sometimes they were without meat, sometimes even lacked bread. Disease, too, was rampant, and smallpox ravaged the camp. Privation made the troops mutinous, and at times it seemed as if "in all human probability the army must dissolve," and the actual strength of the army was reduced to barely four thousand who could be depended on for service. Washington affirmed on December 23d that over twenty-nine hundred men were ineffective "because they are barefoot and otherwise unfit for duty." Scarcity of blankets, he says, compels numbers to "sit up all night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in the natural way."

A congressional committee which visited the camp reported that many lives were sacrificed for want of straw or other materials to raise the men when they

slept from the cold and wet earth. The horses died of starvation, and the men themselves often had to do the work of beasts of burden, with improvised hand-carts or carrying heavy loads on their backs. The dilapidated soldiery were as badly off with regard to firearms as they were in other respects. Some would have muskets, while others in the same company had carbines, fowling-pieces, and rifles. These were covered with rust, half of them without bayonets, and many from which not a single shot could be fired. Frequently the men carried their powder in tin boxes and cow-horns instead of in the regulation pouches.

The condition of the army was primarily due to the feebleness of the Union of States and the lack of power on the part of Congress to levy taxes or to enforce its edicts. The states were jealous of each other, and there was fear that the army would assume control of the country if it was allowed too much power. Yet, even so, the hardships of the troops were not all a necessity. Incompetence, as usual, played its part in the commissary department; there were supplies in plenty, it is said, but they were in the wrong place, and often Washington could only obtain food by foraging far and wide through the country round about. Many of the farmers were hostile, and, to save their grain from seizure, they stored it away unthreshed in sheaves. If it was to be confiscated, the soldiers themselves must wield the flail.

The millers were equally perverse, and in one instance a lot of glass was ground into the flour. An investigation followed, and it was decided that the person guilty of this mischief was a Quaker Tory by the name of Roberts. A detail of troops was sent to his mill, and they hanged him in his orchard.

The Valley Forge encampment was virtually at Philadelphia's back door, and an easy road along the

The Schuylkill at Valley Forge

banks of the Schuylkill led directly to the city. Yet the British army, fifteen or twenty thousand strong, stayed revelling in the town all through the winter and spring. The only excuse offered is that no spy ever got into the American camp or, if he did, he never succeeded in returning, and the English did not know their enemies' weakness. Perhaps, too, they got an

exaggerated idea of the wildness of the country up the Schuylkill from the names of some of the river villages that intervened between them and the patriots' stronghold — Monayunk and Conshohocken, for instance.

In the evening after my first day's tramping I visited the Valley Forge post-office. It occupied a corner in a genuine country store. The ceiling of this emporium was low and dingy, the counters rude, and the shelves were piled full of a most varied assortment of goods. Posters hung here and there advertising plug tobacco and other wares, or announcing prospective auctions of the region. Of course the stove in the centre of the room was hedged around with men smoking and absorbing opinions and news from one another. Their clatter was going full tilt when I came in, but at once subsided into mild-voiced and occasional remarks. I sat down at some remove from them to write a letter, and they gradually recovered.

All but one of the men had their hats on. The exception was a thin, elderly man who wore slippers and was apparently a part of the store. The others addressed him as "Uncle Buxton." He was actual uncle to the postmaster, I believe, and adopted uncle to the rest of the community. I noticed presently that he was speaking about a well he was having dug, and was complaining that the diggers did "a good bit o' torkin', but mighty little work."

"I reckon it's too near the road," commented the

man at Uncle Buxton's right. "Y' see every one goin' along has to stop 'n' ask all about it and tell what they think on't."

"Henry Shaw's sick again," remarked a man in a fur cap, who had established himself conveniently near the box full of sawdust that served as a spittoon.

"What's he got this time?" some one inquired.

"They say it's pneumonia."

"That there's what they used to call inflammation of the lungs," Uncle Buxton declared.

"About all the diseases hev changed names since I was a boy," said the man in the fur cap, shifting his quid.

"That's so," assented Uncle Buxton. "I was up to my niece's week afore last and I was coughin' some and she says, 'Why, Uncle Buxton, you've got the grip.'

"'No, I ain't!' says I.

"'Yes, you have!' says she.

"'No, I ain't,' I says, 'I've got a bad cold, but I ain't got no grip. It's just a bad cold, same as I had when I was a boy.' But if you have a bad cold now, people call it the grip."

"And if you hev the grip now," said the fur-capped man, "they think they got to send right off for a medical doctor. Why, when I was a boy, my mother used to doctor us — never thought of runnin' to a professional for every little thing. My mother used to

always every year pick St. John's-wort and life-everlastin', horse-mint, penny-r'y'l 'n' such things in the pastures, and we had sage 'n' horehound growin' in the garden."

"Any one that understands the herbs knows more than the doctors — that's my idee," said a man who was addressed by his companions as Jerry.

"Yes, and you c'n often cure yourself a good many times," affirmed Uncle Buxton, "if you only have a min' to. Gorry! I know I used to have the sore throat — had it all the time — and I was a great coffee drinker them days — drank it every meal, 'n' I thought I'd stop. So I did, 'n' my sore throat got well, 'n' a while after mother said to me, 'Albert, won't you have a cup o' coffee? I got some all made up fresh'; 'n' I said I didn't care if I did; 'n' the next mornin' I had my sore throat again; 'n' then I decided if 'twas a question between sore throat and coffee I'd give up the coffee. So I give it up, 'n' that was thirty years ago, 'n' I ain't drank a cup of coffee since."

"I make my own spring medicine," said Jerry — "costs me just ten cents. I buy that much worth o' cream o' tartar and stir up a spoonful with a little sugar in a tumbler o' water every mornin' before breakfast. It makes a good drink — about like soda-water."

"I got a good receipt for a cough," Uncle Buxton said, "of the woman in at the bakery down at Conshohocken. She's given that receipt to lots o' folks,

and I'd heard of it before I went down there. I had a very bad cough and people here said I was consumptive. My brother was always at me to go to a doctor, but I said I didn't want no doctor, and one day I was in Conshohocken and I went into the bakery and got that receipt. It was half a pint o' white wine vinegar, half a pound o' rock candy, and two fresh-laid eggs. You stewed 'em up together into a kind of syrup, thick like jelly. Well, I took half the quantity o' vinegar and rock candy and one fresh-laid egg and made a jelly, and gin I had used that I was better, and before that I was gettin' worse all the time; and then I fixed up the rest, and that cured me."

"You couldn't 'a' got cured less'n twenty-five dollars if you'd gone to a medical doctor," said Jerry.

"Well, I don't begrudge the doctor his money if he cures," remarked the man in the fur cap, "but if he don't cure, it comes kind o' tough."

When I rose to go I glanced at the auction posters once more. It occurred to me I might attend one of the sales if the distance was not too great. "Where is this Wednesday auction to be?" I asked.

"That's the one at Howltown, ain't it?" queried some one in the group about the stove.

"No," put in Uncle Buxton; "that's four miles from here, over at Di'mond Rock."

"Diamond Rock," I repeated, "how does it get that name?"

"Why, this 'ere rock's full o' little di'monds," responded Uncle Buxton — "crystals, you know. There's small holes all over the rock, and you can look in and see the di'monds shinin' there, plenty of 'em. Folks go with hammers and knock 'em out, so the rock is pretty well chipped now."

"Will any of these mills at Valley Forge ever be used again?" I inquired, changing the subject.

"I don't know, indeed," was Uncle Buxton's reply. "They ain't improvin' none. That one by the depot is the worst. It's all goin' to wrack, and the top story's fell off; but it's nothing like as old as the other two mills. The upper mill on the crick was a cotton and woollen mill and has got a good water-power and a good dam. The old dam washed out in 1865. There was a cloudburst up the valley, and the water riz way over the banks, roarin' an' rushin' along full of deb-ris and carrying away all the bridges, and dams, and everything. Since the mills all closed, Valley Forge's been kind o' a run-down place; and then, last year, there was a minister made us some more trouble."

"How was that?" I asked.

"Why, we was goin' to have a Baptist church built. The minister collected the money, and then he spent it himself. He was found out and had to leave. Now he's up at Perkiomen runnin' the streets — that's about all he's doin' 's far's I c'n find out."

"Do you think," said I, "that Washington's

A Valley Forge Footpath

The ruinous buildings are the former homes of the operatives who worked in the deserted village mills

soldiers had as hard a time here as we read they did?"

"Yes," replied Uncle Buxton, decidedly, "I do. There's a colored woman lives in Philadelphia, and she's a hundred and thirty years old, and when she was a girl she was owned out near here by a family named Huston, and the soldiers was so bad off Mr. Huston used to go round gathering up stuff to give 'em; and the colored woman — she was a little girl then — went up to the camp with him sometimes, and she says the soldiers' shoes was all worn out, and she could track 'em around on the snow by the blood from their feet. My grandfather was with the Vermont troops, and I've heard him tell, too, how things was, many a time. He said one cold spell Washington appinted a dress parade, and he asked the soldiers to all put on their best clothes and look just the finest they could. They did it, and then he had all them picked out that was comfortable dressed and set 'em to work choppin' wood. The rest he had stay in their huts to keep warm. If people was to go through the hardships o' that winter now, they'd all die. They ain't got the spunk they had then — nowhere near!"

On one other point I asked enlightenment. I had failed to find what was known as the Washington spring, though I had searched for it again and again.

"It's close by the place where the old forge stood," explained Uncle Buxton, "in a bar'l right by the side o' the road," and he gave minute directions.

I renewed my search the next day, and was rewarded by finding a few rotten staves around a hole in the gutter, full of leaves and rubbish, and not a drop of water. The natives, to whom I afterward mentioned these conditions, apologized for the spring by saying they had never known it to go dry before. Its claim to be the "Washington" spring does not seem to be very valid. The same claim is made for nearly all the springs in the Valley, including two or three the railroad has wiped out. But surely Washington would not have depended on this spring a half-mile distant from headquarters when there were plenty nearer.

The old Potts house, in which Washington made his home, is a square, good-sized stone building, two and a half stories high. A public association has it in charge, and preserves it as nearly as may be in its Revolutionary aspect. Its most pleasing outward feature is the great front door, divided horizontally in halves, after the manner common in colonial days, and shadowed by a picturesque porch roof that pokes out from the wall above. The windows are guarded by solid wooden shutters, and the glass in their tiny panes is only semi-transparent, and distorts with its twists and curls whatever is seen through it.

The rooms within have their ancient open fireplaces and white, wooden wainscoting, and contain a variety of old-time relics, yet there is no touch of life, and the house has the barren look of a museum. This is the

The Entrance to the Headquarters Mansion

more pronounced because of certain barriers it has been necessary to put up to restrain the vandalism of the sightseers. Even the great kitchen fireplace has to be protected. It was kept open until it had gradually

lost every piece of ironware it contained, and then, when a new set of old furnishings was presented, a wire screen was run across the front.

The visitors treat the place as their prey to a surprising degree. Frequently they attempt to avoid paying the ten-cent admission fee. At the rear are spacious grounds of lawn and shade trees, the whole surrounded by a weatherworn picket fence. Over this fence comes many a pilgrim, but sometimes these interlopers get their just deserts, as, for example, a party of eight young women who scaled the palings one day when they thought the keeper was at dinner. He suddenly confronted them, much to their consternation, and in spite of their pleadings, made them all clamber over the fence again and come around to the gate.

One very interesting portion of the house is a low log annex which reproduces a like structure erected by Washington for a dining-room. In its floor is a trap-door, and a steep flight of steps leads down to an arched passage and room underground. The house was built when the Indians were still feared, and this retreat was to serve as a refuge in case the house-dwellers were hard pressed. A tunnel originally gave connection with the near river, whence escape could be made by boat.

Many schemes are broached for improving Valley Forge as a Revolutionary shrine, some good, but others of doubtful wisdom. The danger is of making it a

great show place; for, laid out as a park and adorned with ostentatious monuments, its tinge of wildness would be destroyed, and it would wholly lose its charm and all flavor of the old war days when it was a refuge for the feeble and tattered Continental army.

The House which was Washington's Headquarters

II

WHEN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS ARE WHITE

A Woodland Teamster

THE southern half of New England was bare and brown; but as I went northward I began to see remnants of drifts, and there were upper hillslopes with a northern exposure that were quite white. By the time I reached the mountains snow was omnipresent, the roads were deep-buried, and travelling was done on runners. My train carried me many miles up the tortuous valleys, and the aspect of the region became less and less inviting the longer the journey continued. The little farms

appeared unthrifty, and the frequent, great vacant hotels only accented the desolation.

I stopped at a village I will call Maple Glen. Like most of the hamlets of the district it consisted of a small group of houses around the railway station, with scattered farmhouses on the roads leading away from this nucleus. It looked lost or misplaced in the white world of frost with which it was enveloped. One doubted if it would thaw out in all summer. Many of the dwellings were meagre little affairs with a few pinched sheds about them. These were the homes of the unenergetic or shiftless. Their dreariness was not due to the poverty of the region and its remoteness from markets, for signs were not lacking that some degree of prosperity was within the reach of all. A portion of the inhabitants grasped it, as was evidenced by buildings repaired and modernized and made pleasing to the owner's eyes by the application of paint in the striking colors that are at present fashionable. The hotels furnish excellent markets during the summer for eggs, poultry, milk, and early vegetables, and considerable work is to be had at the sawmills which abound along all the streams, while in winter good wages can be earned chopping and teaming on the mountains.

I looked about the village and then went into the station to warm up by the fire. Several men were lounging about there, and two or three others entered

soon afterward. One of the latter was an old-fashioned Yankee. He shook hands cordially with an elderly man who seemed to be a particular friend, and said, "Haow dew yeow pan aout tewday?"

His pronunciation was not a fair sample, however, of the conversation I heard in the mountains. On the whole the people used surprisingly good English, and the nasal twang supposed to be characteristic of rustic New Englanders was seldom very marked.

In a corner of the station waiting-room stood a crate of oranges. It had come by express for the local storekeeper. One of the men in the room presently called attention to it and told how fond he was of oranges and named just the length of time it would take him to devour a dozen of them. Another man said there wasn't enough taste to oranges to suit him, but he could eat lemons right down. This led a third man to relate that while he didn't have any great hankering for either oranges or lemons, he could despatch sixteen bananas without stopping to breathe. Then a fourth epicure declared nothing suited him as well as peanuts. "I golly!" he exclaimed, "I c'n walk from here to Littleton, and that's ten miles, and eat peanuts all the way."

What other gastronomic revelations might have been made I cannot say, for just then we were all attracted to the windows by a commotion outside. Two drunken fellows were walking along the road, jarring against each

A Load of Logs on a Forest Roadway

other and gesticulating and shouting. The older of the two, who looked to be about twenty-five, was Joe Button, so the men in the station said, and added that he had married, some months before, Eliza Hicks, a girl of thirteen; yet the match was on the whole perhaps a good thing for her, it was argued, as her parents were dead and there was no one to take care of her. The couple were reported to get along well together in spite of her youth and his drunkenness. "But my daughter used to go to school with her," commented the man standing next me, "and she says Eliza puts on terrible airs over her and the other girls now, because she's married and they ain't. The girls pretend not to care, but I guess they feel it some."

Evening was approaching and I inquired where I could get lodging for the night. My only chance, I was told, was at a boarding-house a little way up the track. This boarding-house proved to be a small yellow dwelling neighboring a sawmill. It was kept by a stout, shrewd-looking Frenchwoman. She had only two or three boarders just then, for the mill was not running, and I was welcome to stay if I chose. The house was very plainly and rudely furnished, but was clean and orderly. I sat down in the kitchen. In a chair near me was a large framed portrait that had apparently just been unwrapped. The woman said it was a crayon enlargement of her mother, and she thought it was very good, but she would never get another. "It is too

much troubles. The man he comes here long time ago and he say he make portrait my mother free if I buy the frame — the portrait, it cost nothings. I say I will take the portrait for nothings and never mind the frame, but he say he not do business that way. So I pick a frame and he say he want cash. I say how I know you ever be here another time. I pay you when you the picture brings. But he tell it large expense for the very fine work he do and he must have moneys. I say then I will pay him two dollars and no more, and he say very well. So I have only but a ten-dollar bill and I ask him can he change it and he say he can. But when he get it he take out the full price and I cannot make him do different. He say it is the price only of the frame anyway and a great bargains. I pay four dollars eighty-five for that frame, but I have see just as big a frame at Lancaster in a store for dollar twenty-nine, and my sister's husband he get portrait like this made large thrown in with a suit clothes. It not so great bargain, I think.

"Well, that agent man, he get my money and it be long time until I think I never see him no more, but to-day he come, and he say they put some extra works on the picture and express, so I have to pay one ninety more. But I say I never order no extras, and they bring themselves the picture, so there be no express, and I have pay all I will. So we have some talks, and he goes away. Oh, we have many pedlers comin' along

here all the times, and tramps too. Some of the tramps make me afraid. I always give them to eat; but if they looks bad or like they was drunk, I keeps shut the door and put somethings in paper, and opens the door only enough to hand it out. One Sunday, a big fat tramp came. All the mans was in the house — my boarders — fifteen mans — and I was not scare that time. It was mos' dinner, and I say, 'You have to wait. If there anythings left I give you, but I got only jus' 'bout 'nough to fill my boarders.' He say he in considerable hurry, so he go on some other house.

"I was most scare once that I was cleaning the buttery and a tramp he came right into the buttery and say, 'I want some kind o' grub.'

"And I say, 'Why you not knock?'

"And he say he see nothing of nobody and the door open, so he walk in. I been churning and I have six poun' butter and have just put it on the shelf, and he say he guess he have a little o' that butter; and I take a knife to cut, and he say he don't min' to have a whole cake — two poun'. Then he say he will have some tea and some sugar, and he take two breads and other things; he look awful bad, and I so much fright I do all he say; and he see a dinner pail all new and shiny, and he say, 'I take that, too; that be kind o' handy for me.' But I tell him that belong to my boarder — 'I can't give you that'; and he say he 'bliged

to have it and he settle with the boarder when he come aroun' nex'. But I guess that be not very soon, and I not want to see him anyway; he too terrible huggly."

After supper when my landlady had finished doing the dishes and had sat down to sew, we heard a rat in the walls. That reminded her of a chopper who several years ago came to the house to board a few days after he got through the winter in the woods, "and he say he can make the rats go just where he please — send them any place he want; and I say, 'You a nice man — doin' such things!'

"But he say, 'That's all right. It come very handy knowing to do that sometimes'; and I tell him I don't think much of man sending rats round. Well, he been long time in camp, and his clothes much dirty, and he want me to wash for him, and I say, 'No, you hire some other people what does washing here.' But he was a Frenchman and didn't want to spend nothings — these French, they come from Canada, you know, and they brings everything they will need and don't want to spen' one cent. They want to take they money all back to Canada. Then he ask will I let *him* do the wash, and so I did.

"When he ready to go home an' we settle, he don't want pay fifty cent a day, and he say, 'You wouldn't charge so much to a poor workingman,' and I say, 'I would. You heat enough for two mans together, and

I got have the price what I always have.' He want to pay twenty-five cents, but I won't take only my reg'lar price.

"So he went away, and that same day a lot of railway mens come, and the house was full up; and in the night we could not none of us sleep, the rats made so much noise. It was like any one move a trunk and throw a table on the floor — make jus' as much noise as that — and no one believe that was rats. The boarders, they want know the next morning if we hear that terrible noise — that scratch and bang — and they ask if we have ghosts. We never hear any rats before and we think that Frenchman, he go away mad and he mus' make the rats of all the peoples round here come down our place. We didn't have no cat. Every cat we use to have would get fits, and some day we find it turnin' round and grab on the wall and fall on the floor; and we think the cat might jump up on the cradle and scratch the baby, and we get frightened when the cat have fits, and we kill all the time. One of the boarder, he say he heard if you steal a cat, it keep well and never have that sickness same what all the before cats had. So I say, 'If you to steal a cat have a chance, I wish you to goodness would.'

"He kind of keep lookout for cats that day and he found one on the sidewalk 'bout two mile from here; and the boarders say we fed those other cats too much meat, so we didn't any more, and we had that cat eight

or nine years and we got it yet. Soon as we got it that cat begun catch rats. It catch mos' as fifteen a day and it wouldn't never eat that rats once. It catch them all night and it not through catching the next morning, but it so tired then it would not kill, but bring them to the kitchen and leave them run round, and we have to take the broom. That make the boarders laugh.

"The next fall that Frenchman come again. It mos' night, and he go to the barn, but I know him as he pass the window. My husband he milking and he not in the dark remember the man. If he have he take a stick and break his neck. The man he ask if he can get board, and my husband he say, 'My wife manage all that.' So the man come and ask me. He have a bag on his back and it been rain hard and he all wet. He say he can't go any farther; and I say, '*You* the man what send the rats any place you want to. We got lots of rats that night you left. I guess you got you bag full of rats again. No, I not keep you.'

"He never sayed anythings, but jus' walk away down the road."

At the conclusion of this tale my landlady brought from the cellar some potatoes to pare for breakfast, and shortly her lodgers, who had been spending the evening at the village store, came in, and then it was bedtime for the household.

Work at a Logging Camp Landing

After an early meal the next morning I returned to the station, where I found a log train preparing to make its daily journey back on a little branch road into the mountains. I decided to go with it and climbed into the rude caboose at its rear. There were about half a dozen other passengers. They visited and joked and added vigor and spice to their conversation by a good deal of casual swearing and some decidedly less excusable foulness. Our journey was up a winding valley, all the way through the interminable and silent woods. Considerable snow had fallen during the night, but it lay light and undrifted and did not materially impede our progress, though the steepness of the grade made the engine pant heavily. The flakes were still flying, and I could only see a little strip of whitened woodland on either side, and nothing at all of the mountains between which we were passing.

I went as far as the train went, to the most remote of the logging camps — that of Jacques Freneau in the very heart of the woods. The camp was in a clearing beside the tracks. It consisted of a group of several buildings and an eighth of a mile of "landing" to which the logs were drawn from the forest, and from which they were rolled on to the platform cars. With the exception of one or two little shanties of boards the camp buildings were of logs made weatherproof by having their cracks chinked with moss. Their rude construction and the lonely winter forest

that formed their background made them seem exceedingly primitive and out-of-the-world.

Freneau's choppers numbered about fifty. They were not making a clean sweep of the forest, but only taking out the spruces and pines, so that they left woodland behind, though a good deal thinned and devastated. To see the wilderness changed to the desert I would have to go up another valley where the "king contractor" of the mountains was at work. He employed seven hundred laborers and had built for them a whole village of houses laid out regularly in streets. The mountains when he finished were shorn of everything but brush, and invited the farther despoiling of fire and storm, so that it seemed doubtful if the forest glory of which the heights had been robbed could ever return.

A well-worn road led back from Freneau's camp into the woods, and I followed it until I found the choppers. They were working in genuine forest that looked like the undisturbed handiwork of nature, and the trees grew crowded and stalwart. In the past these trees, when they waxed old, had added their forms to the ancestral mould among the rocks where they had stood. But now blows of axes and the grating of sharp-toothed saws were heard among them; and those tiny creatures — those destroying mites known as men — were bringing them down untimely in youth and sturdy prime and dragging them away.

The men sawed off the larger trees, but used their axes for the lesser ones. They usually chopped two to a tree, from opposite sides, and I noticed they could work equally well right or left handed. When a tree is about to fall, the choppers at its base shout to warn such of their companions as are near. At first the tree sways from the upright very gently, and a little snow sifts down from its branches. Then its motion becomes more and more rapid until it crashes to earth. The impact causes a great cloud of powdered snow to burst up like smoke into the air. This slowly drifts away, and by the time it dissipates, the men are working along the prostrate tree trunk, cutting off the branches.

The Choppers

The woodsmen are portioned into crews of four — two choppers, a driver, and a sled-tender. It is the

duty of the last-named to help the driver load, and while the team is making a trip he is busy rolling logs to the road ready for his companion's return. The driver has a single broad sled truck. To this the logs are chained, allowing the rear ends to drag. These ends furrow very smooth and hard tracks, which you have to tread most gingerly or your feet fly from under you with astonishing suddenness. The loads go skimming along the decline at a trot, and in a few minutes are at the landing, where are men who unchain the logs and load them on the cars.

A good deal of rivalry exists between the different crews, and they are always eager to compare records when these are made up in the evening. They work with especial ardor on Saturdays, for it is quite an honor to come out ahead in the week's total. The boss does all he can to cherish this rivalry, and sometimes offers prizes — perhaps two plugs of tobacco to the crew which accomplishes most in a day, and one plug to each of the three crews which come next.

The logs were marked and a record of them kept by two scalers. The scalers were the aristocracy of the camp, and had a separate cabin of their own. In it, besides the inevitable box stove and a big wood-box, each man had a board desk roughly nailed together and fastened to the wall, and an equally rude bed. Not much factory-made furniture is imported into the camps. The woodsmen get along with what they can

construct themselves. Instead of chairs they use benches, though the scalers had been inventive enough to supply a rocking-chair for their cabin. The main

A Woodsman's Rocking-chair

substance of this article was a flour barrel with a portion of the staves sawed off and inserted for a seat. On the bottom were nailed a few short lengths of boards to form a platform, underneath which were fastened edgewise a couple of boards fashioned into rockers. I tried the chair and found it more comfortable than I would have imagined, though its makers apologized for its lack of upholstering, and for certain nails that were apt to restrain you when you rose.

The man who was chiefly responsible for this chair was a very ingenious sort of a Yankee. Among other

things he had whittled out a birch broom, and each winter he was in the habit of making with his jack-knife quite a number of slender toy barrels, about six inches high, which he filled with gum and sold — some of them to workers in the logging camp who wanted to send away a forest souvenir, some of them to chance visitors. The barrels were very neatly done in white poplar wood, and were marvels of patience.

Camp visitors were usually either pedlers or people from the mountain villages who came on some sort of business. Possibly on a Sunday a priest or a Protestant home missionary might find his way to the camp and hold service, but none had been to Freneau's this winter, and the only manifestation of religion was the regular appearance of salt codfish on Fridays. One of the most recent of the pedlers was a man who took orders for tailor-made suits. His prices ranged from thirteen to twenty-two dollars, and he did very well; but a fellow with watches and jewellery was much more successful. In a single night he sold one hundred and seventy-five dollars' worth. The pedlers received payment in the form of orders on the boss, who deducted ten per cent for his share in the transaction.

Nearly all the men in Freneau's camp were French from Canada. They cleared from fifty to one hundred dollars by their winter's work on wages varying from seventeen to thirty dollars a month, the sum depending on the individual's ability and the work he did.

The men were all young, and they seldom came more than two or three seasons. The probability was they were struggling to pay for some little farm that cost about a hundred and fifty dollars, and when this was accomplished they stayed at home to take care of their property. There was rarely any loitering on the part of these Frenchmen after the labor of the four white months in the forest solitude was done. They started promptly northward with their earnings almost intact; but the Irish and Scotch from Nova Scotia, who made up a considerable fraction of the mountain choppers, were apt to celebrate their release and affluence by a grand spree.

In Freneau's stout log barn were twenty-six horses. He had no oxen. Indeed, the latter are scarcely ever brought into the mountains now. Some of the valley farmers have them and get out lumber from the woodland borders with them; but twenty years ago they were in common use everywhere, both in the forest and out. It was thought then that oxen could do rougher work than horses. The present view is that horses can be put in places where oxen cannot, and their superior intelligence and quickness make them accomplish decidedly more. The only oxen I learned of in the woods were two yoke in a camp a mile below. Their owner was an old-style farmer who was getting timber from his own land. He had a tremendous voice, and on a quiet day could be clearly heard by the men at

A Mountain Ox-team

Freneau's, shouting to his creatures, "Gee off there! Whoa, back! Whoa, hush! Whoa, ho!" etc.

The power of his tones suggested a man hardly less bucolic than the creatures he was directing. I concluded I would go down to see him. During the winter he had employed several choppers, but these had now gone, and only he, and his wife who did the camp housekeeping in the little log cabin, and their son were left. When I approached the clearing I saw that father and son were engaged in loading a car, and were about to put on a long spruce. This was in a pile three or four rods up an incline from the landing, and they were considering whether it would go

where it ought if they simply let it roll. With very little trouble they could have set up stakes to stop it on the lower side of the landing, but they guessed it would go all right, and heaved it loose. Off it went, bumping along, and the men watched it with interest. One end gained on the other, and when it struck the car it only partially lodged on the load, and canted up with the small end down on the track. The men were inclined to blame each other for this outcome, but they soon fell to work again, got their yoke of oxen hitched on to the log, and after considerable trouble succeeded in properly adjusting it. Next they dragged a heavy beech out of the snow on the edge of the woods. It was rather short for the landing, and they were half minded to lay down some skids to make sure it should not go astray. But when they talked this over they guessed it wasn't necessary. "Seems to me it'll do," said the old man; "only be careful; yes, be *darn* careful!" They edged the log along, and so far as I could judge they were "darn careful," and yet at the last moment down went one end between the car and the landing. Luckily the other end caught up above. Even so it was a bad predicament, and the men hitched on the oxen with the remark that if one yoke couldn't draw the log out they would bring their second yoke from the barn and see what both together could do. But a single yoke sufficed, though not without a great deal of exertion on

the part of men and beasts, and a melancholy waste of time. There was little pleasure in watching such awkward work, and I soon retraced my steps to Freneau's, where things were not done by haphazard guesswork.

Evening was now approaching, and I went into the lodging-house. The entrance opened on a low, dark apartment which was called the bar-room, though there was no bar, and no liquors were sold in the camp. Its correspondence to its name lay in its being the men's loafing-place when they were not at work. In one corner was a long sink, with a barrel close by into which excellent water flowed from a spring up the hill. A cracked box-stove stood in the centre of the room, and there was a big grindstone near a window, and several rude benches against the walls. The dining room adjoined. It was nearly filled by four long tables. Separated from it by a slight partition was the office of the camp, serving also as a storeroom and retail shop — a small, narrow room with a box nailed against the wall for a desk, and many shelves piled with gatherings of all kinds. Here were axes, chains, rope, parts of harness, and a supply of old periodicals presented by some religious society. Then there were socks, mittens, overalls, and undershirts for sale, and, in the way of luxuries, plug tobacco, of which the men consumed great quantities.

When it began to grow dark the workers came

trooping in to supper, and, that disposed of, adjourned to the bar-room to spend the evening lounging and smoking. They enjoyed the heat and the relaxation, and I suppose did not mind the gloom, only slightly mitigated by a single lamp and stray gleams from the cracks of the stove. At nine we all went upstairs to the loft where we were to sleep. This loft was even more barnlike than the rest of the house. On the floor around the room borders was a row of bunks, and above these was another row, all made of boards and furnished with straw mattresses and coarse blankets.

In the Sleeping Apartment

The men did not disrobe much, save to take off their jackets and shoes, and soon the dim lamp which had furnished us with light was extinguished and the scattering talk lapsed into silence. Yet there would still be an occasional cough, or some one would

rise on his elbow to spit on the floor. These manifestations of wakefulness also ceased presently, and no sound could be heard save the heavy breathing of the sleepers. I did not drop off as readily as the others; for the situation was new to me, and the bed was too densely saturated with stale tobacco fumes that had been accumulating all winter; and, besides, I had the fancy I might be attacked by crawlers. My concern on this score proved needless, and when I finally slept I was awakened only once. That was about midnight. One of the men was singing in his sleep, and he went leisurely and melodiously through a long ballad in French.

Morning was welcome, and I was up with the first risers and went down to the kitchen — a commodious lean-to immediately beyond the dining room. The work there was done by a little old German and his wife assisted by a boy. Around the walls were shelves and broad counters, and everywhere were boxes and barrels of supplies, piles of tin tableware, pots and pans, and tubs and kettles; and a trap-door in the floor gave access to an excavation in which were stored potatoes. The cooking was done on a great flat stove.

During the winter the fifty men consumed a barrel of flour each, sixty bushels of beans, two hundred bushels of potatoes, seven hundred pounds of oleomargarine, one hundred pounds of tea, and a vast amount of meat and fish. There was almost no varia-

tion in the daily fare, except that on Friday salt codfish was substituted for meat. Bread, butter, tea, and molasses appeared on the table at every meal. The tea was not very strong, but it was unlimited in quantity, and it was kept long enough on the stove to acquire plenty of color. It was served without milk or sugar. Sugar was formerly supplied, but the men were wasteful, put in half a dozen spoonfuls or more and left the bottom of their cups covered with half-dissolved crystals after they had drank the tea. They seemed to have a particular fondness for molasses, and hardly a man failed, three times a day, to pour on his tin plate a generous puddle in which he proceeded to sop his bread.

Beans and brown bread were the breakfast staples, but these as served at Freneau's were not considered first-class, for they were baked in the stove oven. Most camps have a bean-hole — an excavation three or four feet deep in the ground just outside the log dwelling. A fire is built in it, and when the wood is reduced to a great heap of coals the bean-pot is put in with some tins of brown bread on top. Then the pot is covered with coals, and ashes and earth are heaped on. It is left thus through the night, to be exhumed the following morning, and the woodsmen all agree that bean-hole beans are far superior to the oven product.

At noon Freneau's men had potatoes and boiled meat. The meat was usually beef, but occasionally

was fresh pork. For supper the meat and potatoes were served again, this time chopped into lumps and mixed together. Doughnuts appeared on the table morning and noon, and cookies at night. I was told that this fare as compared with what the Canadian French had at home was paradise; but it was a good deal humbler than that in the average of the camps, and stories were related of Yankee camps where they had steaks and ham, cake, bread, and raisin pudding, and two or three kinds of pie.

A Corner of the Camp Kitchen

I wondered that those two old people in Freneau's kitchen could care for their large household. They

looked to be about seventy years of age. Both were thin and gray, the man crooked and stooping, the woman wrinkled but upright. They worked hard and made long days.

"I gets up at three o'clock every morning from dot bed," said the man, pointing to a rude couch in a far corner, "and I have on my underclothes and nightcap, and I don't stop not to put on nothings more but my rubber boots, and then I makes to start the fires here and in the next room and in the bar-room, and about in twenty minutes I get them all roar.

"Then my wife she get up, and we begin get breakfast. The boy what is suppose to help, we not see him until one-two hour later. He like an old man — he so careful of hisself. He would be kill to get up like me. We have the breakfast at half-past five, but these las' few week it is not so soon, for the men they get not up when I rings the bell. They work like a tiger when they come at the begin of winter, but now they have got kind o' balky and will not to hurry.

"These French, they are as more like cattle as anything I have seen. All they have not is the horns. They eat like cattle, and sleep like cattle, and they have not care nothings about your house if it is clean or not. They spittin' everywhere — on the floor — everywhere. An American man, he take off the stove-cover and spit in, or he go outside. But not so the French. Look, too, the way they eat. At the family

table, which is what I call to make high tone of it same like hotel — dot where is set the boss and the teamsters who mos'ly not from Canada, — and they eat jus' one-quarter what do the others. They have the same kind, but they take not so much. How much bread you think I makes every day, hey? It is so much as fifty loaves!

"All the time these French, they feelin' good. The least little thing they will laugh, and so hearty! — it seem to them so awful funny. They are jus' like colored people, I make it — so easy to please as a child. But they do not play much — only checkers sometimes, and one more game, which you lean over mit your face in your hat and put your hand flat out behind you. The others they all stand round, and some one he slaps your hand, and you jump quick mit your eyes out of your hat, and try if you can see who it was. If you say right, dot one takes your place. They play dot game much and for long time and laugh and think it more funny as anything in the world. Other camps they play card; but Mr. Freneau do not allow card for because they gamble their money and perhaps they fight. Last year some they play in the blacksmith shop of our camp, and the boss he found about it and turn them off.

"On Sundays we do not our breakfast eat until eight, and the men that day lie much in their bunks, and some read papers. But the half, they can-

A Scaler

not read at all, they are so ignorant; and so one man he may read aloud to a good many. They mend their clothings on Sunday, and perhaps they wash clean their underwears and hang them to dry, and they might whittle out some axe-helve. It is now coming spring, and we begin have warm Sundays, and the men they go out and run to chase themselves and crow like a rooster and blat like a sheep and all sort of noise, and see which the strongest man at rolling logs.

"You might thinks we be lonesome here, but we have to keep too busy for dot. I have intend, though, not to come into the woods again another time. It is too much cold. This kitchen, it is like one ice-house. There are cracks so many the heat all go out. We had one night thirty-four below zero, and my bread it all froze and had to be thaw before I could get a knife into it. Dot most scare me. We tries to be neat, and we wants to mop the floor often, but when it cold the water freeze right on the boards. Oh, you can't think there is no fun sometimes.

"The taters what we use now have got freeze, too, and most all the days until this week the windows are frost all over so thick we cannot look out, and I have to fight and fight to get the wood dot we burn. I want not to meddle mit anythings not my business, but how we can cook if we have not the wood? It is the dry wood only we use from trees dot are dead and stand up — and you be surprise the wood in them

so dry as one bone. If they fall they get full of wet in no times. It kind of small work chop wood for stoves, and the men not like to spend the time to bother. I wish not to fight, but it is hard not to do dot mit some beoples. You have keep shut your eyes if you don't want to have troubles mit them. That wood makes me much worry and extra works."

The cook while he talked did not pause in his labor save now and then to cast his eyes toward me at the more important points and make sure that I understood. But now he stopped both his remarks and his work to peer out a pane of glass in the low back door. "Did you never see this bird?" he asked at length.

I went to the window, and there was a woodpecker digging away at a haunch of beef that lay over a barrel outside. Later I inquired of one of the scalers about the wild creatures of the winter woods, and he mentioned seeing bluejays, chickadees, and flocks of snow-buntings. Red squirrels were plentiful around the camp and made away with a good deal of corn from the storehouse. Often he came across fox and rabbit tracks on the snow, and some of the men had seen a deer.

Nearly all the time I was in the logging camp it snowed, though never with much vigor, and there were spells when the storm would cease and the clouds lift, disclosing the mountains rising in serene majesty all around. I could as easily have believed their ghostly heights were dreams as realities, so un-

expectedly did they loom forth from the void, and so strangely transformed and unsubstantial did they appear with the snow delicately frosting their tree-clad slopes to the remotest peak. But these wider outlooks were as fleeting as they were enchanting, and soon the veil of falling flakes would droop over the crystal summits, and the world would quickly dwindle to a little patch of snowbound forest close about. This latter view was the most characteristic one as far as my experience is concerned, and it is this vision which remains with me most vividly — a fragmentary vignette of the great white woods, pure and unsullied beyond expression.

A Logging-camp Dwelling

III

A RUIN BESIDE LAKE CHAMPLAIN

Considering his Neighbor's Fields

"WHAT river is that?" asked the man occupying the seat in front of me as our train began to skirt the shores of a body of water about seventy-five miles north of Albany.

He put the question to the conductor who responded, "That's Lake Champlain."

"You don't say so! Why, I could throw across it! I had no idea it was so narrow," and the man seemed disappointed as well as surprised.

He would have found a good deal of difficulty in throwing across, yet the lake really is extremely attenuated at the south end, and slenderness is a characteristic

even to its outlet. On a clear day, especially, the opposite shore is so distinct and apparently near that it requires an effort to remember you are looking on a lake and not the broad channel of a stream. When the distance is veiled in summer haze or with falling rain this effect is less marked, the other shore seems farther removed, and the charm of the lake is greatly enhanced.

The aspect of the surrounding country is gentle and pastoral. There are occasional wooded ridges, and there are mountains, blue and dreamy along the horizon, that are as calmly beautiful as the "Delectable Mountains" of John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress"; but the landscape immediately adjoining the lake is nearly always one of fertile and well-cultivated farm fields. Villages and towns are frequent, most of them wholly rural, with white houses among elm, maple, and apple trees, and a church spire or two rising above the foliage.

The region is not an industrial centre. It is off the main thoroughfares of trade, and, so far as I could judge, even the little manufacturing it had was on the wane. For instance, at Crown Point were iron-works run until recently; but now the furnaces are cold, and the smoke no longer drifts from the tall chimneys, and the huddled, brown-painted homes of the operatives in regular streets with their distressing alikeness and barrenness of surroundings are all vacant.

"It ain't easy to make small plants pay nowadays," explained a native, "and this one busted up and went to pieces last year."

But if things looked rather dismal around the Crown Point iron-works by the lakeside, the town up the hill seemed to be unaffected by the disaster — a simple,

In Crown Point Village

pleasant country place, the abode of farmers and a few shopkeepers. It had a delightfully sleepy, easy-going air as I saw it one spring day. A man on his way to the fields was driving two horses attached to a plough through the street, a carriage was hitched in front of a store while the owner was inside doing some trading, and on the door-sill of another store sat two men visiting.

I rambled on past the common with its flagstaff and its soldiers' monument of the usual type — a column bearing the names of several of the most important battles of the Rebellion with a standing soldier on top, — and I kept on until I left the central village. The houses became scattering, and there were rough hollows given up to pasturage, and, athwart the west, were forest-clad mountains. That it was spring with summer coming was very apparent from the work going forward about the homes — woodpiles being wheeled in from the yards to the sheds, the scratching together and setting on fire heaps of brush and rubbish, and the sowing and planting in the gardens. When a garden was near the road it always attracted the interest of passers, and if a man going along on foot found his neighbor at work with his hoe in the garden plot, he was apt to lean over the fence and get and give some agricultural advice, and at the same time swap the latest items of local news.

On my way back to the town I encountered a small boy, slopping about the borders of a marshy roadside pool, looking for frogs. He had captured two of the creatures and was carrying them in one hand by the hind legs. The boy was perfectly oblivious of the fact that the frogs had feeling. Their distress was naught to him. He had no purpose in catching them beyond idle curiosity — the gratification of some savage aboriginal instinct. When I produced a penny,

he willingly set the frogs free and started off in a bee-line for the nearest candy store.

A man not far away, repairing a zigzag rail fence, had paused in the process of driving in a stake to watch the frog transaction. He was a stubby, elderly man, with a brush of gray whiskers under his chin.

"There's plenty of them creeturs this year," he said, as the boy disappeared; "I got a pond near my house and the frogs holler so nights in that air pond, I can't hardly sleep. Last Sunday, I believe it was, I got up out o' bed about 'leven o'clock and went down and flung some stones at 'em. They stopped then, but they was all goin' it bad as ever by the time I got back to the house."

"How many cows do you keep in this pasture of yours?" I inquired, changing the subject.

"Thirteen."

"Isn't that an unlucky number?"

"Maybe 'tis, but I know I get more from those thirteen than some of my neighbors do from twice as many. I was born and raised on the other side of the lake. They know how to farm over there, and they're bringin' no end o' produce acrost every year that we had ought to raise ourselves. You see this 'ere lot up the hill here next to my pastur'. It belongs to the man that lives in that green and yellow house just beyond the church, and there ain't no better land in the state of New York, but he gets mighty slim crops

Mending the Pasture Fence

off'n it. I'd like to see a Vermont man farm that lot awhile. If you ain't never been around in the country over the lake you'd better pay it a visit; and there's old Fort Frederick, too, over there at Chimley Point, you'd like to see."

But instead of visiting Vermont and Chimney Point I went southward to Ticonderoga. I made a blundering journey; for I learned, after going sadly astray, that if one would leave the train at the station nearest the ancient fortress, he must alight neither at Ticonderoga nor at Fort Ticonderoga, but at a place called Addison Junction. This last is not a town. It is not even a village. The habitations consist of a farm-house or two and several rusty little dwellings in which live workers on the railroad.

I arrived in the late afternoon, and my first care was to find a place to stay over night. Close by the tracks, next the station, was a small house marked "Restaurant." The station-master assured me I would have no difficulty in getting lodging there, though the prospect of doing so seemed to me rather dismal, but he proved to be right. The restaurant part consisted of a single small room with a counter across the rear. A short glass case on the counter contained a display of cigars, and the wall behind was built up with shelves scantily set with bottles and a few boxes of plug tobacco. The house was kept by North of England people. They had come over twenty years before, but they still re-

tained their peculiar home accent, said "Ay" instead of "Yes," and constantly addressed me as "Sir"; while the hired girl, after the English fashion, called the landlady "the Missus." The latter was setting the supper table when I came in, and soon informed me the meal was ready.

After I had eaten, as it was too late to hunt up the old fortress, I loitered down to a ferry not far from my stopping-place. The ferryman was doing some tinkering on shore, and the boat was fastened for the night. It was a flat-bottomed scow that would carry comfortably about three teams. The power used was steam, but many Champlain ferry-boats employ sails instead, thus obliging whoever runs one of the craft to coax it along with oars, or by poling, when the wind is light.

All through the winter the lake is frozen over, and the ice makes an excellent bridge. "You can drive anywhere on it," said the ferryman, "but mostly they only go from shore to shore, unless they fix up a track for a hoss race."

"Are there ever any accidents?" I inquired.

"Well, yes, folks are apt to get careless, and they keep go'n' after the ice begins to rot in the spring. The last man that broke through here was a Dutchman by the name of Schwillbug or something of that sort. He was a pedler and he had a fine hoss, and a cart that was all painted up slick as you please. Over on the other

A Lake Champlain Ferry

side there seems to be a little current at the end of the ferry wharf, and we mostly don't go off the ice right on to the wharf but take a turn out around it. We told the Dutchman how this was, but he knew better and said there was no danger whatever. So he drove straight for the wharf and in he went. He got out himself, but he lost his cart and he lost his hoss."

The sun had set while I lingered at the ferry. Now in the deepening dusk I walked far up over a western hill, at first through the woods and then between pastures and occasional cultivated fields. I went on till from the brow of a hill I overlooked a low valley, a-twinkle with the cheerful lights of a town. A whip-poorwill was calling from a woodland hollow, and numerous blundering beetles were rising from the grass and buzzing amid the new leafage of the trees.

Here and there were houses on the upland, and as I went back I noted them more particularly. They were little, clapboarded, unpainted cabins that bore a close resemblance to the negro hut of the South. Some of them were scarcely large enough to contain one decent-sized room, but I suppose they usually had at least a kitchen, a bedroom and, overhead, a low chamber. Most of the dwellings had an accompaniment of sheds and a small barn, and the premises were strewn with litter and unsheltered tools and vehicles. Under the eaves of each house was a water-barrel and, close

by, a nondescript and meagre pile of wood still uncut. Apparently the inmates never got a supply of stove wood ready ahead, but daily used axe and saw when necessity compelled. The hamlet was a characteristic community of poor whites — a gathering of the shiftless, the unenergetic and unambitious, and to some extent of the vicious. I inquired later about these people, questioning if there was not a prospect of their bettering themselves and whether their poverty was a necessity.

"They live along from year to year just about the same," was the reply, "and I can't say as they improve any. They could get ahead if they was a min' to. But what some folks don't spend on eatables they spend on drinkables, and that's the whole secret of it."

At my lodging-place, when I returned, "Kit" the hired girl was putting on her things preparatory to going to a neighbor's to watch with a sick woman for the night. "She's got the typhoid," Kit explained, "and the Missus and me and quite a number of women around here go in and help what we can. Land's sake! I do' know what they'd do if we didn't, though they've got the handiest little girl there I ever see. She's only ten, poor little soul, but she's a worker, and she can cook as well as a grown person. Her father's a brakeman on the railroad, and he says since his wife's been sick he's never come home but that girl of hisn's had the victuals ready right on time.

When she ain't nothing else to do she likes to sit and rock and read. She's a regular old grandma — that's

Rhubarb

what she is. There's six children and she's the oldest. She takes good care of the little shavers, specially the

baby. Yesterday I gave her an apple and 'stead of eating it herself she pared it and gave it to the baby. He was sitting on the floor with it when I come away and she said, 'You bet he'll keep a-lappin' that till he's lapped it all down.' Well, I must be goin' or that girl'll lock the door and go to bed."

The next morning was fair and warm. The meadows were jubilant with bobolinks, and great numbers of swallows that had homes in the lakeside banks were darting hither and thither. I made an early start and turned my footsteps toward the old fort. It was barely a quarter of a mile from the station in a direct line, but the route thither was by a devious farm road through the fields. This road was little used and was hardly more than a few wheel ruts cutting into the turf. It went through several bar-ways and two or three dooryards and ended at a pasture gate which was wired so securely I was compelled to clamber over.

In the pasture a herd of ponies was feeding and they came nibbling toward me to investigate. But when they discovered that I was bound for the ancient fortifications, they seemed to lose interest and left me to my fate. On the highest slope of the pasture I had seen from afar a group of ruins. The more prominent of them were the gray, ragged stone walls of what had been the officers' barracks. These were hardly massive or extensive enough to be exactly imposing, yet they looked satisfactorily historic and they gained much

from their striking situation. The land falls away to the north and west very gradually, but to the east and south it drops in steep bluffs and green-turfed declivities to the lake, and the height commands the waterway most thoroughly. The crowning ridge of the pasture was upheaved in a chaos of stone walls, great ditches, and grass-grown banks, and there were lesser fortifications scattered over a considerable area neighboring. The walls of some of the old barracks were yet fairly intact, and I could see what had been their original height and where had been the windows and the fireplaces; but our climate is not kindly to ruins, and the stones are constantly dropping and the walls crumbling. It is a wild, neglected spot. The mullein grows stoutly here and there, and I found the mounds and ditches much overrun with clumps of thorn trees and cedars and by a thicket of little poplars with their leaves a-flutter in the breeze.

The sole garrison of the place seemed to be a woodchuck. He saw me coming while I was still at a considerable distance and hastened toward his hole in one of the earthworks. But his curiosity was greater than his discretion, and he would make a little run and then pause to learn what were my intentions. When he reached the mouth of his hole, he waited until I came within two rods of him. Then he dove down out of sight. I stood a few moments to see whether he had gone for good, and shortly he poked his nose out

again, and I am not sure but that he had his eyes on me all the time that I spent in the vicinity of his citadel.

Few places on our continent excel Ticonderoga in historic attraction. Even the name is sonorous and heroic, and its capture by Ethan Allen is one of the best-remembered events of the Revolution. The victory was a bloodless one, yet the story has many picturesque accessories that stir patriotic enthusiasm. Western Massachusetts and Vermont were at that time sparsely settled, and the greater portion of them and of northern New York was an undisturbed wilderness. Roadways were few and it was customary for travellers going north and south in this district to take advantage of the natural highway furnished by the Hudson, Lakes George and Champlain, and the Richelieu River.

To secure this route to themselves the French had long before pushed southward from Canada and built frequent blockhouses and other defences; and in 1735 they erected Fort Carillon, or as it was afterward known, Fort Ticonderoga, the strongest fortress on American soil. So powerful was it that its existence caused not a little anxiety in England. An attempt was made by the English to capture it in 1758, but after repeated assaults and great losses the attacking force retreated utterly demoralized toward Albany. The next year another large force advanced on Carillon and the French blew up that and the rest of the forts along the lake and fell back to Canada.

Ticonderoga Ruins

By the English the stronghold was rebuilt and its name changed to Ticonderoga, the Indian name of a neighboring waterfall. Because of the strength and importance of Ticonderoga's location, the Colonies at the beginning of the Revolution were naturally anxious to possess it. The initiative toward accomplishing this object was taken by several gentlemen in Connecticut, who got together secretly at Hartford, in April, 1775, and having found certain persons willing to engage in the enterprise, furnished them with funds to buy supplies and defray the other expenses that might be incurred. These persons set off immediately for Bennington, Vermont, with the intention of getting

Colonel Ethan Allen to join in the undertaking and help raise an adequate force for the capture of the fort. On the way their numbers grew to about sixty, and a hundred more men were soon added from the hills of the New Hampshire Grants, as Vermont was then called. A vote was then taken, to determine who should be the leader, and the honor was awarded to Colonel Allen.

Meanwhile, a committee in eastern Massachusetts, unaware of the action of the Connecticut conclave, appointed Benedict Arnold, who was then at Cambridge, "commander-in-chief" over a body of men not exceeding four hundred which he was directed to enlist, and with them to reduce the fort at Ticonderoga. To carry this commission into effect Arnold promptly proceeded to the western part of the state, where he learned, much to his chagrin, that his plan had been forestalled. He then hastened with a single attendant to join the little band in Vermont, and on the 8th of May overtook the Green Mountain Boys just as they had completed their preparations and were about to set forth. But Arnold had no sooner arrived than he asserted the right to take command of the entire expedition, alleging that this was his due by virtue of his commission from the Massachusetts committee. To this high-handed claim the rank and file of the troop strenuously objected. They chose to go under their own officers or not at all, and were for "clubbing their muskets and

marching home." Indeed, such a mutiny arose that the whole design was almost frustrated. But the matter was finally settled, and Arnold was to some extent placated by being assigned an honorary place and allowed to move at the head of the column on Colonel Allen's left.

The Americans by the night of the 9th had contrived to cross the lake, and lay near the fort waiting for daybreak. With the first hint of morning light Allen led his followers to the entrance of the fort. The gate was shut, but the wicket was open, and though the sentry snapped his fusee, before the alarm he gave could summon his comrades, the Americans had dashed into the fort and raised the Indian war-whoop. Little resistance was offered. The few soldiers on guard, after a shot or two, threw down their arms, and Allen strode to the quarters of Delaplace, the commandant. As he reached the door Delaplace appeared in his night garments and listened in amazement to the demand for the surrender of the fort.

"By what authority?" asked the startled Briton.

"In the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," was Allen's reply.

The assault was entirely unexpected, the surprise was complete, and the valuable fortress, with its large equipment of cannon and ammunition, fell into the hands of the Americans at a very opportune time.

Within the next two years they made Ticonderoga a stronghold that they thought well-nigh impregnable. They threw up numerous outlying defences, erected Fort Independence on the bluffs across the lake and connected the two forts with a sunken bridge. One of the great logs of this bridge was not long ago detached and brought to the shore, and an old farmer with whom I talked told me he had a portion of it at his house.

"Some say wood in the water'll rot," said he, "but it won't. You keep wood in the water all the time, or you keep it perfectly dry all the time, and it'll last forever. It's wet *and* dry raises the mischief. This log that they pulled up had lain there and never seen the air in more than a hundred years, and it was as sound as a Spanish milled dollar."

In spite of all the Americans did in strengthening Ticonderoga, it failed them at a most critical time; for when Burgoyne reached it on his famous invasion, they were obliged to ingloriously abandon their elaborately prepared defences without a shot. To the southwest, on the other side of Ticonderoga Creek, or "Ti Crick," as it is called locally, rise the steep wooded sides of Mt. Defiance. The Americans had fancied the height was one which could not be scaled with cannon, and when the British accomplished this, Ticonderoga was at their mercy, and the Americans could do nothing but get out.

However, the earlier investment of the place by Ethan Allen is the better recalled. It was far more dramatic — "And yet," commented the old farmer whom I have previously quoted, "nothing was ever more foolhardy. Allen was completely in the power of the British. He played 'em a trick and the trick worked. It was just luck. If he hadn't succeeded, we'd all say what a crazy notion it was. Same way with Funston capturing Aguinaldo out in the Philippines. He come out all right, but it was chance just the same, and it'd been a foolish business if he'd failed."

The Pasture in which stand the Old Fortifications

IV

IN THE ADIRONDACKS

A Fisherman

"I'LL be ready in a minute," said the stage-coach driver, and then he spent half an hour stowing away a vast cargo of boxes, barrels, and other miscellany in his rusty, canopy-topped vehicle. So little spare space was left I was thankful that I was the only passenger. I had just alighted from a train at a little station among the outlying foot-hills of the mountains, and my destination was an inland valley. When the driver climbed in and took up his reins to start, I called his attention to several

great piles of hemlock bark near by awaiting transfer to some tannery.

"Those piles ain't nothin' to what we used to see," was my companion's comment. "Our timber lands are growin' poorer all the time, and hemlock bark's gittin' more skurce every year. We're cuttin' off everythin' we c'n git a cent for — that's the trouble."

From what the driver said and all I had heard of lumbering in the Adirondacks I expected to find the mountains much denuded, but to my eyes they seemed still heavily timbered. Yet most of the finest trees have undoubtedly been felled, and the ancient primeval majesty of the forest is departed forever.

We had not gone far on our road when the driver pointed with his whip toward a high mountain slope across which there was a drift of yellow smoke. "By gol, look a' that!" he exclaimed. "Thar's a fire up in thar, and it's started since I went down an hour ago. But it's too early in the season for it to burn good. The woods ain't dry yit. Last summer we fit fires stiddy for a month, and the fire wardens got out every one they could git. Sometimes thar'd be a hundred men workin' on the same mountain. We carried shovels and dug trenches. You see the top o' the ground was dry several inches deep, and would burn off. We'd dig down to whar it was damp, and when the fire got to the ditch we'd made it would usually stop; but if thar was a stick lay across, or a dead tree

got to burnin' and fell over the line, the fire would start again and we'd have to trench around it once more. It ain't a job I like — fightin' fire — with all the smoke and climbin' and the diggin'. Sometimes I've been surrounded by the fire and had to break a way out through the flames. You have to look out for that."

"How do the fires start?" I asked.

"We don't often find out for certain, but thar's a lot o' fire bugs in the mountains. They're sore over the game laws, or they start a fire so's to earn some money puttin' of it out. The pay's high enough to make that quite an inducement. We git two dollars a day. The state pays half and the town half; and you never can tell when you git a lot of men out whether they're workin' or not. Some of 'em just lie around drunk. Last year's fire ran over those ridges on ahead thar. You c'n see whar it's burnt, can't you?"

Yes, I could see long stretches of the upper mountains that seemed to be a charred desolation of black earth and gaunt, dead trees. It looked as if the green would never return.

"Off on those higher mountains are white patches that appear to be snow," I remarked presently.

"I do' know but they are. More likely, though, they're bare rocks and the sun glistenin' on water that's runnin' down over 'em. Still, thar's snow in some of the high hollows most all summer. We've

got what they call an ice cave in the town whar I live, and every Fourth of July regular the young folks go up to it and have some fun snowballing. Thar'll be plenty of snow thar next Fourth if we c'n judge anything by the winter we've had. Worst winter for snow't I c'n remember. It begun in November with a three-foot storm that caught us all unexpected. I'd been ploughing the day before, and it buried my plough out of sight. I had to go and dig the plough out of a drift that was higher'n my head. For five days we was cut off from the mail and everything else. Dozens of weak roofs was broken in — mostly of sheds, piazzas, and barns, but sometimes of houses. After that storm we never had any let-up. The snow kept comin' and gittin' deeper all winter. Thar was too much for good sleighin' and too much for loggin' in the woods; but it went fast as soon as the sun begun to warm up about the first of April."

We were now going through a narrow pass between two mountains, and I mentioned the wildness of the spot to the driver. "Yes, it is kind o' wild," said he, "that's a fact. This is a great runway for bears across here. They've got a den back on one o' the ridges not fur away. You find their tracks in the road often, and about a year ago this time as I was walkin' my horses up the hill we're comin' to I see a bear — an old big fellow — large as a cow — diggin' out mice at the foot of a rotten stump. But they keep out o'

the way and don't often show themselves. Lot's o' people that have lived in the Adirondacks all their days have never laid eyes on a live wild bear. Do you know Len Hoskins? He's a hunter and guide, and he's got a little place off in the woods where he stays a good share o' the time. He sees bears every year. He routed out one bear right in the middle of winter. 'Twa'n't nothin' strange. The bears don't hide away in the rocks as you might think. Rocks are too cold. They like to crawl into some hollow, or a narrow place between two fallen trees and let the snow drift over 'em. This bear of Len's had put up not so very far from a wood road, and Len was goin' along and his dog was with him, and the dog run off among the trees and begun to bark and paw the snow. Len saw't he'd struck some game, and he sicked the dog on, and first thing he knew a bear rose up out of the snow. The bear got the dog, but Len, he had his gun, and he got the bear.

"I had a little adventure myself one time when I was spending a few days with Len. He had some bear traps out and one o' the animiles got caught. It was a little year-old cub, and I expect it had been in the trap for at least two days when we found it. The trap had broke the bear's leg, and it had got out and left its leg behind, but it couldn't go far. We'd been out pickin' berries and hadn't nothing except our jack-knives and a couple of long sticks we'd cut for canes,

and we'd 'a' let the bear alone if we'd thought we was goin' to have any trouble. That little beast was terrible spunky, if it didn't have but three legs, and soon as it see 'twa'n't no use tryin' to git away it showed fight. First it would go for Len and I'd whack it with my stick, and then it would turn on me and Len would git in a whack. We had a fifteen minutes' tussle, and I worked harder and sweat more than I ever have in that length of time before or since. But at last we killed the critter and slung him on a pole and carried him to camp. We had bear steak for a while then, and I called it better'n venison."

"Do the bears ever trouble the farmers any?" I inquired.

"No, they don't do much damage. I did some think they got six sheep o' mine a few years ago, but I guess those bears didn't have more'n two legs. Thar wa'n't the least sign o' the sheep to be found nowhar, and a bear always leaves the hide, if nothin' more. It's torn some, but it's cleaned out a good sight cleaner than you could git it with a knife. The deer do the most harm. They'll git over the best fence we got, and the back lots next to the woods ain't never safe from 'em. They spoil more'n a little grain for us, and they're gittin' worse, too. The law don't allow hunting of 'em with hounds now, and they ain't so timid as they was, and they're increasin'. But thar's too many hunters for 'em ever to git very numerous."

About the middle of the afternoon, the stage reached the end of its route, and I continued farther into the mountains on foot. Most of the way the road led through the woodland up a valley, and had close beside it a swift, noisy stream. The forest was charming with the emerald and tawny tints of spring, and was musical with bird songs. As for the walking, it might have been better. Sturdy rocks humped up out of the earth at intervals in the very centre of the highway, there were often muddy shallows in the low spots fed by little rivulets that trickled down the wheel tracks, and not infrequently I encountered boggy places which had been filled in with brush and corduroy. The corduroy was not, however, of a very strenuous type — not much more than saplings. You would have to search far now to find the genuine article, but it used to be common in the Adirondacks, wherever the road inclined to be soft. Ordinarily it consisted of substantial sticks about six inches in diameter, but which might be as much as ten. In any case they would fairly make one's teeth rattle to drive over them.

Along the road I was travelling were occasional meadow openings occupied by a house or two, or perhaps several of them; and in the fields near these houses I was pretty apt to see men and boys busy ploughing and planting. The land in the clearings was for the most part steep and broken, and the

An Adirondack Farmer

soil so stony that the progress of a man ploughing was very jerky and uncertain. He was constantly striking, not only loose stones of all sizes, but heavy boulders that brought him to frequent sudden stops. Then he had to pull and haul to get ready for a fresh start.

Wherever I went during my Adirondack stay the houses were small and usually unpainted. The barns were likewise meagre and rusty, and though the storage room they afforded was likely to be eked out by a number of sheds and lean-tos, it never seemed to be equal to demands. A very common arrangement of the house buildings was to have the barns just across the road from the house. If such were the case, the manure heaps were very likely thrown out of the stable windows on the houseward side in conspicuous view. This was simply a matter of barbaric convenience, and was formerly customary in all our older farming regions.

The Adirondack sheds and barns were often of logs; but the era of log construction is past, and buildings of this kind are becoming rarer every year. The majority of the log dwellings that still remain have been added to and improved past recognition, and the rudeness of those that continue as originally built is a constant distress if their caretakers have any pride. The logs used are hewed off a little on each face, so that they are halfway between round and square, and the chinks

are stopped with plaster. Such houses are considered warmer in winter than frame buildings; but the floors are uneven, the log sills of the second story are exposed, and the walls inside and out are alternating ridges and hollows. If the rooms are papered, the roughness of the walls is still apparent, and the paper is sure to crack badly and peel off in spite of all that can be done.

One of the Adirondack days I remember with especial pleasure was a certain lowery Friday. In the afternoon I was caught by a shower that came charging with its mists down a mountain glen. I hastened along the forest road while the drops played a tattoo on the leaves overhead, until I reached a roadside house where I sought shelter in a woodshed with an open front. This shed was in the ell of a house adjoining the kitchen, and was used in part as a back room. The far side was stowed full of neatly piled split wood, but in the other half were pots and kettles and pails, a swill barrel, and a rusty stove. I asked a woman at work in the kitchen for a drink of water; and she brought out a chair for me, and stepped across the yard and filled a dipper at a tub set in the ground. This tub was connected with a spring up the hill, the woman said; but, though springs were abundant, very few of the neighbors had running water. They were deterred by the expense of buying pipe, and got along with wells. From these they as a rule drew the water by means of some old-fashioned windlass contrivance,

or a pole with a hook on the end, or an antiquated well-sweep.

I had not been long in the shed where I had taken refuge when a small boy in a big straw hat came around the corner of the house. He carried a fish-pole and a tin box. He had been fishing for trout, he said, but had caught chubs.

"Do you always fish for trout?" I questioned.

"Yes."

"And do you ever catch any?"

"No," he acknowledged despondently, "just chubs. I put 'em in this box. It's full of water."

He took off the cover and showed me several tiny fish swimming about within.

"Are they good to eat?" I inquired.

"No, they're only good to kill," he responded with frank innocence of his savagery.

Now his mother called to him. "Willie," she said, "I wish you would bring in some wood before it rains any harder — that wood outdoors, you know, that we didn't have room for in the shed."

The boy went lingeringly toward the remnants of a pile in the yard. "It's thunderin', mamma," said he.

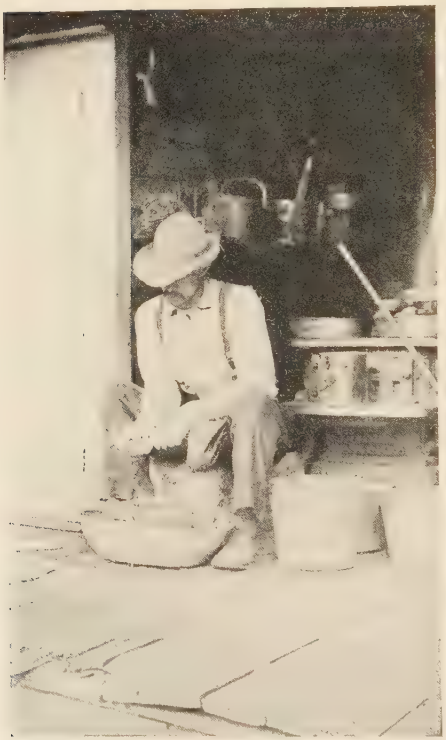
"You'd better hurry, then."

"Sounds like tumblin' down stones."

"Hurry up!"

"Mamma, there's a hawk!"

"Well, I don't care!"



Shelling Seed Corn

"It's a chicken-hawk, I guess! Come aout and see it. It'll get those little chickens of ourn."

"Don't stan'out there hollerin' any longer — bring in the wood."

But the boy had slipped away behind the house, and a few moments later he reappeared with his father, whom he had summoned from the cornfield.

"Let me have my gun!" the man called to his wife, with his eyes turned skyward toward the hawk, and the woman handed it out to him. He clicked a cartridge into the muzzle and aimed at the soaring bird. But he did not fire. "Too high up," said he, lowering the gun and passing it back to his wife. "Well," he went on, "I guess I'll shell some seed corn, and then if it keeps on rainin' I'll go fishin'."

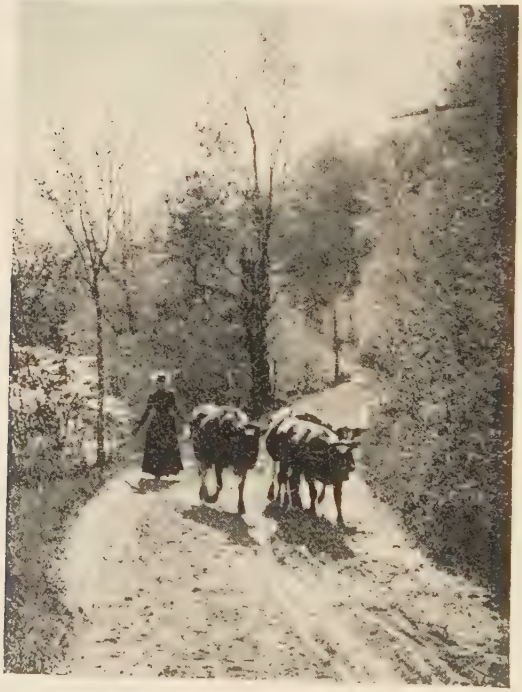
"Do you go fishing every time it rains?" I queried.

"No, but I'm pretty apt to. The fish bite better in drizzlin' weather."

He did not go this time, for he had hardly got his corn and sat down in the shed to shell it, using his hands and a cob, when the sun began to glint through the flying drops and to brighten the green, watery landscape. "Hello!" said the man, "'Rain and shine to-day, rain to-morrer.' That's the old saying, but I'd like to have it pleasant for about a week so I could finish up planting."

As soon as the shower was over I resumed my rambling, and the tumbled ridges of the Adirondacks never loomed finer than they did then, veiled in the moist haze that succeeded the rain, with here and there a filmy cloud floating across the loftier heights. Wherever I obtained an extended view, the mountains looked mighty and magnificent enough to satisfy their most ardent admirers. I plodded along the muddy roadway, sometimes in the dripping woods, sometimes amid little house clearings. Toward evening I met a small drove of cows coming home from pasture in charge of a woman, the whole making a delightfully idyllic bit of life there on the quiet of the secluded forest way, with a murmuring stream close at hand and the tink, tink of the bell on the leading cow's neck adding its musical, rustic accompaniment. A little

later I came to a house with a pasture just across the road, and in the pasture a lad milking. The boy said most people drove their cows into the barnyard to



Bringing in the Cows after their Day's Grazing

milk them, but his folks always milked them there at the pasture bars in summer. I had stopped to ask if I could get kept over night at some place near, and he sent me to the next house up the hill — Mr. Macey's.

One never has much trouble in getting lodged in the Adirondacks. The wayfarer can find accommodation at almost any home where he chooses to stop, and the standard price is fifty cents for a room with supper and breakfast. The house I sought was a little brown dwelling on a slope overlooking a vast sweep of valley and dim mountains. Mr. Macey was standing in the yard smoking his pipe when I approached — a thin, gray man of rather more than threescore years. In response to my question as to whether I could stay for the night he leisurely removed his pipe and said: "You'll find my wife and daughter in the house thar. It's the women folks that do the work. All I do is the eatin'. You c'n talk with them."

A stout, elderly woman appeared at the kitchen door just then, set two pails of milk out on the piazza, and asked rather sharply, "Why don't you feed this to the calves as you was goin' to an hour ago?"

The old man stepped over to the piazza and took the pails with an alacrity that betokened a smitten conscience. At the same time I went to the door and proffered my request for lodging.

"It wouldn't be convenient to-night," replied Mrs. Macey. "We're goin' to keep a spectacle pedler that came along before supper, and it wouldn't be convenient to take any one else."

I was turning away when I was met by one of the sons of the family coming across the yard from the

barn with the pedler of spectacles. "What's the matter?" he asked. "Where you goin'? Can't get kept? Well, I'd like to know why! See here!" he continued, turning to his companion, "you're used to sleepin' three in a bed, ain't you?"

"Yes, sure, six!"

"Do you kick?"

"No, but I give you fair warnin' I'm a snorer."

"That's all right. You just as soon bunk in with this man, hadn't you?"

"Why, yes! If he's satisfied, I am."

So it was settled and I stayed. The house proved to be of logs, but these had been clapboarded over, and the real construction was not revealed until I went inside. There I found the logs very apparent, though partially hidden by a covering of wall-paper. Overhead was the flooring of the rooms upstairs, with the long sagging logs that served for joists incrusted with many coatings of whitewash.

While I sat at supper eating alone, for I was late and the others had finished, Mr. Macey came into the back room. "I been talkin' with that spectacle man," he remarked to his wife, "and he's a plaguey nice feller, I'll bet ye."

"Well, you be careful then he don't sell you nothin' you don't want," was Mrs. Macey's comment, as she came in to the supper table with a plate of cake. The dog followed her. "Here, get out of here," she com-

manded, taking up a piece of bread and throwing it out into the back room.

Mr. Macey had entered the dining room and was standing by the stove opening his jack-knife. "That's a good dog," he said to me, "if he does get in the

Picking up Chips

way once in a while. He ain't never barking and snapping at people. I'd as lieve a man's children would come out and throw stones at me as to have his dog run out and bark at me every time I go past."

Mr. Macey now took up a stick and began to whittle shavings. He did not sever them from the stick, but

left them fast at one end. When he had bristled up the stick to his satisfaction, he laid it down, and took up another which he treated in like manner.

"What are you making?" I inquired.

"Kindlings. You see you touch a match to the ends o' them shavings and it'll start up a good blaze right off. Whittling kindlings is a job I do every night. I have to have two or three sticks fixed for this stove, and two or three for the back-room stove. I'm usin' cedar wood from some old fence posts at present, but I like pine better when we can git it."

After I finished eating I visited the barn, where I found Mr. Macey's two sons, Geoffry and "Ted," milking. They were lively, capable fellows about eighteen or twenty years of age. I was just in time to see Ted get into trouble with his cow. The creature put her foot in his pail, and he jumped up, fierce with wrath, and banged her with his stool, and called her slab-sided, and went on to blast her with as wild and sulphurous a string of invectives as I have ever heard. But the milking was nearly done, and the boys soon went to the house. The family presently got together in the dining room, which also served as a sitting room and to some extent as a kitchen, and the spectacles pedler and I "made ourselves at home" with them.

"If I had such a cow as that red and yellow one I'd sell her," Ted remarked to his father with great disgust.

"What's the matter?"

"She's got altogether too contrary a disposition. You can't make her stand still."

"She'll stand still as a mouse when I milk her."

"These are the easiest galluses ever I wore," interrupted Geoffry, giving a hitch to his suspenders; "but they feel darn funny when the buttons are off."

"They're made o' leather, ain't they?" asked the spectacles pedler.

"Yes," Geoffry replied, "I had 'em built special at the harness-maker's. Come, Ted, sew on this button, will you?"

"I'll sew it on," said his mother.

"No you won't, ma. You've done enough to-day. I'd sew it on myself if it wa'n't around back of me."

Ted was willing enough and seated himself behind his brother and got to work, at the same time mentioning to his sister that he wished to goodness she'd make some pie-plant pie. "I was looking in the garden this afternoon," he went on, "and the pie-plant's gettin' good and big."

"Oh, gee, Ted! why don't you say rhubarb?" Molly commented. "If you was ever to take dinner at a restaurant in the city, and ask for pie-plant pie, they wouldn't know what you meant. They'd think you never had been out of the woods before."

"That wouldn't be anything much," declared Mr. Macey. "There's people here in this town that never've been outside the county — men older'n I am."

"There's some people in this town too smart for the clothes they wear, I know that!" affirmed Geoffry, severely.

"I'll warrant you there are!" exclaimed the pedler of spectacles. "Some in my town too."

"I know a girl," said the daughter of the house, "who's never seen a train of cars in her life, and she's twenty-two years old."

"I jolly!" said the spectacles man, "if I was one o' you boys, I'd hitch up and take that girl down to see the cars right off."

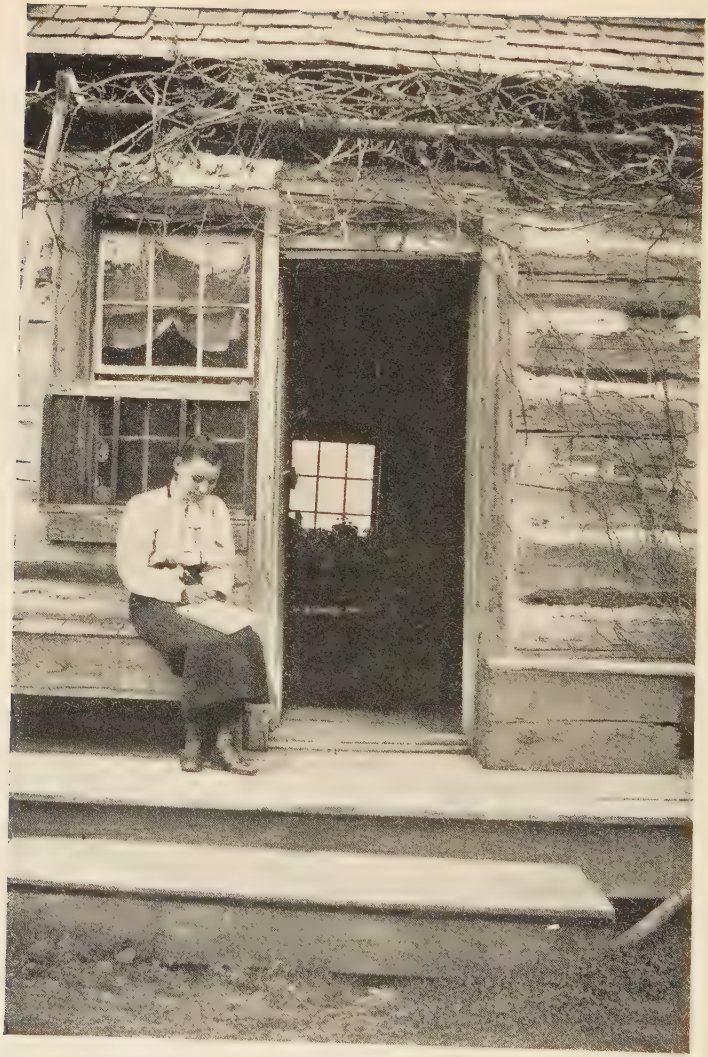
"Oh, thunder! you don't know the girl," snorted Geoffry, "or you wouldn't be so sure. She'd talk you to death. It's nineteen miles to the railroad and nineteen back."

"It's more than that, my kind little friend," said Ted, and then the two brothers entered into a dispute to settle the exact distance.

Meanwhile, Mr. Macey had got out his pipe and was filling it. "I hain't been everywhere," he remarked, "but I'd be ashamed o' myself if I hadn't never seen a train o' cars."

"Say, mister, you would, wouldn't you?" was the pedler's comment.

"Well, a man that's more curious to me than anyone else around here," began Geoffry, "is a fellow I know of who gets his living by sitting in his chair and making ashes, and he's got a large family to support.



The Kitchen Door of a Log House

Making ashes is about all I've ever seen him do — just smoking, you know. I've offered to give him a cow for the receipt of how to live without doing nothing. He ain't got no cow, and he needs one bad, but he won't sell me the receipt."

"He's got a horse," said Ted.

"Yes, but what's that horse o' his'n good for?" queried Mr. Macey. "He keeps it just for swapping. He'd spend all his time swapping horses if he could find any one to swap with, specially when he sees a chance o' gittin' something to boot. If he c'n git a dollar to boot, it don't matter what sort of a horse he gits; and there's times he'll only git a rooster or a dozen eggs. Then, again, he maybe has to pay boot. But I c'n say one thing for him — he'd starve before he'd steal."

"Pete Foster's laid up yet with his sprained ankle," remarked Geoffry, changing the subject. "He says he wishes it had been a broken bone. Thinks if it had been, he could 'a' ordered a new one and got it here by this time, and been out and around."

"What'd he say about that two-shillin' hen he bought?" inquired Ted. "He's tellin' everybody that now."

"Oh, he said he bought the hen, and the idea struck him he'd have it to eat, seein' he was kind of an invalid at present. So he got the hen ready for the kittle, and his wife set up all night and boiled it. She didn't

seem to make much progress in cookin' it tender, so they boiled it all day, and 'twa'n't done then, and Pete he set up all that night to keep it boilin', and the next morning, he tried it again, and it was so tough he couldn't stick a fork into the water it had been boilin' in."

"Pete's kep' pretty straight sence he took the Keeley cure, hain't he?" Mr. Macey interrogated.

"Yes; he won't even eat mince pie that's got cider in it."

"Do many take the Keeley cure here?" I inquired.

"Oh, land, yes, lots of 'em; and some come back and go right to drinkin' again; and then perhaps they'll take the cure a second time and pay the hundred-dollar fee twice over and still drink. But with a good many it really makes a man of 'em. I've known fellers cured that beforehand was that crazy for drink they'd swallow Jamaica ginger or peppermint essence, if they couldn't get anything else."

"What did you mean awhile ago when you were telling of a two-shilling hen?" I asked Ted.

"I meant it cost two shillin's — two York shillin's — same as twenty-five cents. Folks speak of shillin's a good deal round here, though there ain't no money of that denomination, and never has been since I c'n remember. Mostly we reckon in shillin's when we c'n talk about a single shillin' or two shillin's. Sometimes you hear four shillin's instead of fifty cents, and

ten shillin's instead of a dollar and a quarter, but for the rest we say dollars and cents."

"At the house where I had dinner this noon," said I, "the man told me he went fishing the other day and put six flies on his line, and he hooked three fish at once. He got two of them, and the smaller one weighed a pound and the other weighed two pounds, and the one that broke away was big as both those he caught put together."

"How'd he know about the heft of the one that broke away?" queried Mr. Macey.

"He didn't explain that point," I replied. "He said he caught the fish in the river down in the valley below here, and they were trout from California that had been put in the lake up above. They were so gamey he couldn't pull them out, and he had to play them and use a net."

"I've heard about their putting in those trout there from California or some other foreign country," said Ted. "I hooked one myself down in the holler last summer and it did act queer, but I finally treed it and got it."

"What was the man's name where you stayed for dinner?" Mrs. Macey asked.

"Dickon."

"Dickon!" ejaculated Geoffry. "Well, I hope the Lord you didn't believe all *he* told you!"

"Did you have Dutch cheese there?" inquired

Mr. Macey. "They're great hands for Dutch cheese at Dickon's."

"They had it on the table," I answered, "but it isn't a thing I care for."

"Gosh, I do! I wish I had a chunk of it in my paw now. I'd lay down my pipe and eat it. Where was it Dickon said they'd put in those trout?"

"He said in the lake."

"What lake's that, I wonder."

"He meant the pond, father," Geoffry explained. "The city people don't like ponds, and I don't believe there's a pond left in the Adirondacks now. Dickon drives for one of the sporting-houses in the summer, and he's caught the city notion of giving what we've always known as a pond a more tony title."

"What do you mean by a sporting-house?" I asked.

"Oh, just a house where the city people stay — a summer hotel. There's one sporting-house in this town that'll accommodate three hundred people. It's only about two miles from here, but you have to climb a deuce of a hill to get to it."

"We've got a picture of it somewhere," said Mrs. Macey. "Won't you see if you can find it, Geoffry? and perhaps this gentleman would like to look at that picture of our house we had taken last year."

Geoffry after a short absence brought forth the latter from the next room, remarking: "I can't find

the sporting-house, but here's this. It was made by some men that came along in a photograph cart.

Sowing Oats

That's my mother and beloved sister sitting out in front with the dog. There wa'n't no one else at

home. You can see the shingles that we'd patched the roof with where it had been leakin', and the whole thing's very natural, I think."

"A while after the fellers had been along with their cart," said Mr. Macey, "they come again and brought the picture all finished to sell, and they wanted two dollars for it. That was too much. I'd a' paid a dollar and been glad to; but they began to throw off when they see I wouldn't pay their price, and then I didn't know what the thing *was* worth. They got down to fifty cents finally, and I said I'd give 'em a quarter. They said the lowest they'd take was half a dollar. So after a while they started off, but they hadn't got far when they stopped and hollered back for me to get my quarter. It was a good bargain, I guess."

"I don't think so," commented Molly. "What do you want a picture of your own house for? If you want to see your house, all you have to do is to go out and look at it."

"I'd like a picture of some of the houses the way they was when I was a boy," said her father — "log houses with stone chimneys outside built against the ends. In the kitchen you'd find fireplaces big enough to take in a backlog four feet long and two feet through. I'd like to see my daughter here try to get a meal in one o' those fireplaces. I know just how my mother used to fry flapjacks — she'd stand

there front o' the fire with her long-handled frying-pan, and when a cake was done on one side she'd give a shake to loosen it and then toss it up, and it would come down on the other side. The floors were of split logs hewed off flat. The kitchen'd have one or two bedrooms opening off of it, and up above under the roof there'd be a long, low chamber that you went up to by a ladder.

"My wife, here, has a wool wheel yet, and spins her own yarn and some to sell; and a good many of the older women in the Adirondacks does the same. But the spinning they do is nothing to what their mothers did. Besides wool, they used to spin flax, and they had looms and wove their own cloth, and they made all the clothes for the family. I c'n remember, too, how in the winter my grandmother would put on a pair of men's boots, and wade through the snow to the barn to milk. Some women still know how to milk, but very few make a practice of it. I tell you, them old-time women did a lot o' work that the women don't do these days.

"In my grandmother's family they ate off pewter plates. They didn't have no crockery, and when company came they'd use the pewter just the same, only they'd give it a special shinin' first.

"My mother every fall'd make up twenty-five or thirty dozen of dipped candles, enough to last till spring. Candles was all we had for lightin' the house,

bumblebee himself, and tried to sting Geoffry. The game went on for some minutes, and then Ted turned to me and asked if I had ever played "Chipmunk."

I had not, and the brothers proceeded to illustrate. Ted got down on all fours, facing Geoffry, and the latter, who remained seated, spread apart his legs and by putting his open hands just inside his knees made a kind of human trap. Ted, squeaking and chattering in imitation of a chipmunk, dodged his head this way and that over the trap, and when he thought there was a good opportunity bobbed it down between Geoffry's legs, while Geoffry attempted to make a capture by thumping his knees and hands together. But the chipmunk had escaped, and he set his trap again. Ted, this time from below, went on chattering and making feints to confuse Geoffry until he fancied he could safely jerk his head back up; and when Geoffry really did grip Ted's head the two changed places. Long before they had wearied of this sport, Mrs. Macey, who had retired, called out from an adjoining room, "Boys, do stop that noise and go to bed. I shan't get to sleep to-night if you keep up that racket," and this brought the evening's sociability to a close.

In the morning the family were stirring about four o'clock, and by breakfast time, at half-past five, a good start had been made on the day's work. Salt pork had chief place in our morning bill of fare, but was supplemented by boiled eggs and pancakes made from home-

A Home in a Valley

grown buckwheat. As soon as we finished eating, the boys turned the cows and sheep out to pasture, hitched a pair of horses to a wagon and drove off to an outlying field they were planting to potatoes. The spectacles pedler lingered a short time in an attempt to dispose of some of his wares and then resumed his itinerant journeying. Mrs. Macey and Molly busied themselves with the kitchen work, while Mr. Macey, after doing a number of small jobs around the place, sat down on the piazza to cut seed potatoes. The best of the potatoes he sliced into a bushel basket, the small ones he put in a pail to boil for the pigs, and the rotten ones he dropped into another pail to throw away.

"You'd ought to seen the schoolhouse we had here eight years ago," said Ted. "It was made of logs and it had got so old it wa'n't fit to keep calves in. The sides were squshing out, and some of the sleepers that held up the floor had rotted off one end and some the other end. The stove had a rack around it on the floor two or three inches high, that was filled in with small stones and dirt, so the sparks and coals falling out from the stove wouldn't set the building on fire. The last teacher I had was Jane Traver. Her great punishment was to have every boy that didn't behave roll a boulder into the schoolroom from the yard and sit on it. I didn't mind that. It bothered her more than it did me. I'd spread my handkerchief over it, and then she'd scold me, and I'd tell her I had to put my handkerchief on there, the rock was so hard."

Ted paused and took something from the bottom of his wagon. "Here's an animile we killed over by the woods this morning," said he, holding it up.

"A hedgehog, eh?" was Mr. Macey's comment. "That reminds me of a ghost story. I suppose you know what to say to a ghost?" he inquired, looking toward me.

No, I did not.

"You want to say, 'In the name o' God, what do you want o' me?' Then the ghost'll have to answer. But what I was goin' to tell about was a happenin' years ago at a neighbor's by the name o' Stetson.

They heard a sound every night like sawing wood, in the woodshed with a buck-saw."

"Did they?" Ted interrupted. "You bet your life I'd get up a lot of wood and let the ghost saw."

"The people would look into the shed," his father continued, "and there wa'n't nothin' there. Well, that sawin' kep' on, and every night the folks would come from all around to hear it, and the Stetsons was gettin' pretty well scared. By and by I went one night, and I heard the sawin' same as the rest, and we took the light and looked into the shed and couldn't find nothin' to cause the sound, high nor low. Then I went outside, and just around the corner, what'd I find but a hedgehog, gnawing at an old barrel the Stetsons had bought salt mackerel in; and I threw the barrel down into a brook that was close by, and they never had no more trouble after that with any ghost sawin' wood in their woodshed. You see it sounded so like it was inside, no one never thought to look outside before."

"Well, I don't wonder the people was frightened," said Mrs. Macey. "Even a little mouse will make a horrid noise in the night."

"Yes," declared Ted, as he and his father emptied the cut potatoes into the wagon, "and if you hear a gray squirrel running through the leaves in the autumn, you'd think a catamount was after you."

With this remark, Ted drove off, and not long after-

V

THE HOME OF FENIMORE COOPER

On Cooperstown Street

IN 1785 William Cooper, the novelist's father, visited the rough, hilly country in Otsego County of central New York. At that time the region contained no trace of any road and not a single white inhabitant. "I was alone," he says, "three hundred miles from home, without bread, meat, or food of any kind. My horse fed on the grass that grew by the edge of the waters. I laid me down to sleep in my watch-coat, nothing but the melancholy wilderness around me."

Yet the pleasant landscape, the fertility of the soil, and the fact that an estate here was his for the taking,

made him determine that this should be his abode. At the southern end of Otsego Lake, where for a century the Indian traders had been accustomed to resort, he two years later laid out a village, and to this spot he in 1790 brought his family.

The novelist was the eleventh of twelve children. He was born in 1789, at Burlington, New Jersey, the residence of his mother's people, and was taken to Cooperstown when he was thirteen months old. There he lived a healthy, natural, country life, surrounded by pioneer out-of-door influences that did much to direct his tastes and shape his character. The house in which he dwelt during his early boyhood was an ordinary farm-house; but in 1798 his father erected the good-sized mansion known to fame as Otsego Hall. This stood on rising ground, facing the lake, with the village clustering about it, and both in its generous proportions and its situation was a fitting home for the town's founder and chief citizen.

The site of the old Hall is still the heart of the town. The village has grown, but it huddles closest on the narrow southern margin of the lake. Here is a single, broad business street that runs square across the valley of the lake-basin, and at either end is a wooded bluff. From this main thoroughfare the houses straggle away on various minor streets and lanes. The place has many characteristics of a country market town, but at the same time it contains numer-

the channel where the waters find a way to escape; and they departed so gently and the tree-embowered passage was so narrow it was not easy to realize that here I beheld the source of the Susquehanna.

On this same side of the lake, just outside the town, are pasture slopes, delightful at the time of my visit, with cows grazing in the dandelion-spangled grass. Down below, the shore was fringed with bushes, among which were many "shad-berries" and "pin-cherries" all ablow with white blossoms. The land on this side of the lake as you go on farther rises in steep ridges overgrown with woods; and dwellings and cultivated fields are infrequent. I preferred the other side whenever I chose to take a long walk. It is more pastoral, the slopes milder. I recall one afternoon's walk on the western highway in particular. The new leafage was getting well started, the grass was beginning to grow rank in the meadows, and the air was full of bird-songs. Chipmunks and red squirrels chattered among the trees and raced up and down the trunks and through the branches with almost as much ease as if they had wings. The prevalence of the streams, too, contributed to the spring gayety. They were everywhere, varying from tiny tricklings to lusty brooks capable of turning the wheels of a small grist or saw mill. Noise and haste were dominant traits, and they coursed down the hills through channels littered with rocks and pebbles, and made many a shining leap.

The Margin of the Lake

I kept on for several miles. Sometimes the road was close by the lake, sometimes well back up the slopes. Once I made a detour and went down to the water's edge across a swamp where flourished jungles of poison ivy. At my approach a sandpiper fled with thin-voiced protest in nervous flight along the shore, and a profound-looking kingfisher gave a squeak and adjourned to some nook more secluded. They might have saved themselves the trouble of such exertion on my account, for the wetness of the marsh and the prevalence of the poison vines discouraged me, and I was glad to beat a hasty retreat.

When I at length had gone northward as far as I cared to and had turned back toward the town, I was overtaken by a lumber wagon drawn by a heavy pair of work-horses. The driver pulled up and asked me to ride, and I accepted the invitation. The horses never trotted, but they walked briskly enough to keep the springless wagon constantly jolting, and the ride was not altogether comfortable. Still, the change was welcome, for the road was decidedly muddy.

"They've been over it lately with the road-scraper," explained my companion, "and dragged in the dirt from the sides. It's dirt that washed off from the road, and it's all wore out and ain't fit for a road any more, and the last rain we had just softened it into pudding. This road was a plank road when I was a little shaver. There was a lot of plank roads then.

They was very good when they was new, and we'd rattle along fine — ten miles an hour the stage calculated to make. If you met a team you had to turn off on the ground because the plank wa'n't only long enough for a single track, but the tops was laid level with the ground, and that didn't matter. The greatest trouble was that the plank got worn after a while and the knots begun to stick out, and new planks put in here and there helped make it more uneven — kind o' shook you up then.

"This road was planked twenty-seven miles, all the way to Fort Plain on the New York Central. That was where we had to go whenever we wanted to get to the railroad. It was a hard journey, especially at the break-up of winter, when the stage was sometimes much as two hours getting through — part way on wheels, and part way on runners, perhaps. We was mighty glad, I can tell you, when this little branch railroad that strikes in here from the south was finally built. The plank roads was owned by private companies, and there was toll gates every four or five miles, but it was too costly keepin' the plank in repair, and by and by they pulled 'em up and put in gravel turnpikes. Those didn't pay either, and so the companies went out of business and let the public fix their own roads."

As the driver finished speaking, we were passing a broad field on the farther side of which I could see

Putting on a Fresh Coat of Paint

three children wandering about and occasionally stooping to pick something. "What are they doing?" I asked.

"Seem to be cutting dandelion greens," was the

reply; "but it's gettin' rather past time for dandelions, and they'll have to boil 'em in soda-water to take the toughness out. Some use milkweeds for greens. I like cowslops myself better than milkweed or dandelions either. You take a nice mess of cowslop greens in the spring, picked before they get in blossom, while they're tender, and they're all-fired good."

"This is fine farm land we're driving through now," I suggested.

"Yes, it's all right. It don't pay for itself, though — but then it don't have to. You see that big house down there in the trees. Belongs to a New York lawyer. He's only got about twenty acres of land, and yet he keeps three hired men. They raise some crops and take care of a few critters, but mostly they're busy just makin' the place look nice. Almost every pretty point of land along the shore here has got an expensive house on it that some city man has put up, so he can amuse himself by making a fad of fancy stock-farming or something of the sort. Now we're comin' opposite another handsome place. The grounds front on the road for half a mile, and the whole distance there's this big stone wall. A stone wall's a thing a poor man can't afford. It's an expensive fence, no matter how you calculate — always tumblin' down, and brush and vines always growin' round it. This wall's as well built as it could be, but the frost will heave it, and every spring a couple of men spend a good many

Getting Ready to plant his Garden

days repairing of it. When it begins to pitch there ain't nothing can save it, and they have to take the bad places clean down to the foundation and lay 'em over."

I continued on the lumber wagon not only as far as the town, but a mile or two beyond, down a broad, fertile farm valley. On the east side of the valley the land rose in high slopes checkered with cultivated fields. "The farther you go up the hills in that direction," said the driver, "the thinner the soil gets, and an American couldn't get a livin' off'n it; but there's English from across the Atlantic that'll take that high scrub land and clear it, and do well. That is, they get to own their farms and have money at interest — though they ain't satisfied no more'n any one else."

We passed several large hop fields, set full of tall poles, at the foot of which were green outreachings of vines. In one field were two women tying the straggling stems to the poles. "There ain't only a few got at that job yet," remarked the driver. "Hops are a great crop in this part of the state, but they ain't lookin' first-rate this year — didn't stand the winter well — and a good many farmers are ploughing 'em up. They don't pay as they used to. The price has been goin' down for a long time. You can't get a decent crop unless you give up your best medder land to 'em and put about all the manure your farm makes on 'em. So

folks are givin' 'em up and goin' more into dairying. There's a cheese factory at the village that they bring their milk to, and that pays 'em on an average about two cents and a half a quart.

"The time was when we got considerable money out of our woodland, but the best lumber's pretty near all gone now. Twenty years ago there was a tannery a little below the town. It used a power o' hemlock bark, and lots o' farmers would cut their hemlocks and peel 'em and let the trees lie and rot. They don't waste any good lumber that way any more. The tannery went out of business long ago, and the building was fixed over into a sawmill. It stands on a crick that comes from the hills to the east. That crick's about as boisterous a stream of its size as I ever see. When we have a big rain it rises right up and tears everything all to pieces. At first the sawmill was run by water-power, but the crick carried off the dam so often, they finally got tired of rebuilding it and put in steam. They burn the old waste to run their engine — sawdust and everything — and so it don't cost much gettin' up their steam."

Presently I inquired about the town as it was in Cooper's time. "I wish you could 'a' talked with my father," was the response. "He knew all about it. 'Twas just an ordinary little country town — a few stores, and a couple o' churches, and two wooden taverns, and about all the rest of it was farm-houses.

'Twa'n't built up the way it is at present. I know father told how a hill that's now got houses all over it was in them days outside the town a hundred rods or so, and it was covered with pines. When a horse died they'd drag the carcass up there and let it lay, and

Spring Work in a Farm Field

think they'd got it well out of the way. They used to call that hill 'The Horse Heaven.'

"I don't think Cooper left his family in very good circumstances. His daughters was very nice — real ladies, — and they was very charitable, and give away an awful sight, so't I do' know but they most suffered themselves. They made kind of a hobby out of the

orphanage here, for one thing. You'd have an idea that Cooper's books would bring considerable to the family long after he was dead, but they say he sold a good many of 'em outright, and after his death there wasn't much in money ever come in from 'em."

Although Cooper's home town is very closely identified with him, he did not always reside there, and he was a good deal of a rover in his early life. At the age of nine he went to Albany, where he attended school for four years, and then entered Yale, the next to the youngest student in the college. He won no laurels at Yale, for the woods and fields possessed for him a far keener attraction than books, and his poor standing, added to some boyish prank in the third year of his course, led to his dismissal. His father now sent him to sea before the mast on a merchantman. This was intended as a preparation for later going into the navy, which he entered as a midshipman at the age of nineteen. He served until he was twenty-two, when he resigned his commission and married.

Meanwhile his father had died, and in the family home at Cooperstown dwelt his mother and older brother. Cooper himself lived in New York, Philadelphia, and other places, and spent the eight years preceding 1834 abroad. When he returned, Otsego Hall became his permanent residence. The dwelling had hitherto been a simple, commodious village house, but he remodelled it, added a wooden battlement,

The Monument on the Site of Otsego Hall

threw out porches and projections, changed the windows to the Gothic style, and gave the whole structure an air that bore some resemblance to the ancestral home of an English country gentleman.

Here he kept open house to his friends, cultivated his garden, and wrote. Here also he became involved in that curious series of lawsuits that resulted in many years of bickering. He came back from Europe to our raw, new country, and expressed with great frankness his impressions of his native land, and these were not at all flattering — there was so much pretension, so much that was crude and ungenuine, and he spoke with especial severity of the capricious vulgarity of the newspapers. The public, always oversensitive to criticism, became more and more irritated. Then came the Three Mile Point controversy between Cooper and his fellow-townsmen, which brought on a general storm of denunciation.

The Point which caused the disturbance is an attractive wooded ledge jutting out into the lake from the western shore three miles above Cooperstown. It had long been in common use as a picnic ground, and the townsfolk had begun to feel that it was public property and that no one had any business to interfere with their continued appropriation of it. But the ownership was in the Cooper family, and the novelist, with his aristocratic notions about private estates, absorbed during his long residence abroad, wished to have

his ownership recognized. He had no desire to deprive the people of their picnic place. He only wanted them to ask such use as a privilege, not take it as a right. To effect this end he published a card warning the public against trespassing. As a consequence a mass meeting was convened, at which it was resolved to hold Cooper's threat and his whole conduct "in perfect contempt," to have his books removed from the village library, and to "denounce any man as a sycophant, who has, or shall, ask permission of James F. Cooper to visit the Point in question."

Cooper fought with vigor and persistence what he deemed the unreasonableness of his neighbors, but his victory was never complete, and he finally dropped the matter, and the public used Three Mile Point again unconditionally. This was not, however, the end of the trouble. It had been given wide notoriety by the newspapers, and their comments were so personal and offensive that Cooper was stirred to institute many libel suits against them. Such was his independence, his pugnaciousness, and quick temper that he kept up the warfare for years. Yet this interfered but little with the tranquillity of his home life. He was closely bound to his family, and was always warmly affectionate; and though he had his enemies, he was much liked by those who knew him well, and he never failed to win the regard of the men who worked for him. Two miles to the north, on the

eastern side of the lake, he bought a farm and built on it a cottage of the Swiss type. He named the place "The Chalet" and entered with great enjoyment into the superintendence of clearing and improving the land, extracting stumps, setting out trees, raising crops, and rearing poultry. He was particularly interested in his live stock, and the animals knew and followed him in recognition of the kindness of his treatment.

It was customary for the family to breakfast at nine, dine at three, and have tea at seven in the evening. The novelist rose two hours before breakfast and began writing, and after the morning meal resumed his pen until eleven. The rest of the day was free to other pursuits. For recreation he frequently went out on the lake in his boat — a skiff with a lug sail. This rude little craft went along very well before the breeze, but was of not much use in beating to windward. It was, however, quite to its owner's liking, and was conducive to leisurely contemplation, and in it he doubtless thought out many a stirring chapter for his books. Cooper never kept a carriage; a horse and buggy sufficed instead and served him when he chose to drive up to "The Chalet." This was a trip he made nearly every day after he finished his literary work, for a stay of two or three hours.

His habits were methodical, and he seldom allowed anything to keep him from his desk during the morn-

ing hours. He composed with ease and never lacked for words or for subjects; yet authorship was in his case purely an accident, and he was thirty when he began his first book. This book was the outcome of his remarking to his wife one evening as he threw down impatiently a recent novel he had been reading aloud, "I could write you a better book myself."

She laughed at the absurdity of the idea and challenged him to undertake the task. Hitherto he had disliked even to write a letter, but now he set arduously to work and finished several chapters. Then he would have quit had not his wife become interested and urged him on; and presently "Precaution" was not only finished, but published. It was merely an imitation of the average English story of fashionable life. Yet it revealed to Cooper an unexpected capacity, and he at once began a thoroughly original American story — "The Spy," which has been called "the first brilliantly successful romance" published in this country.

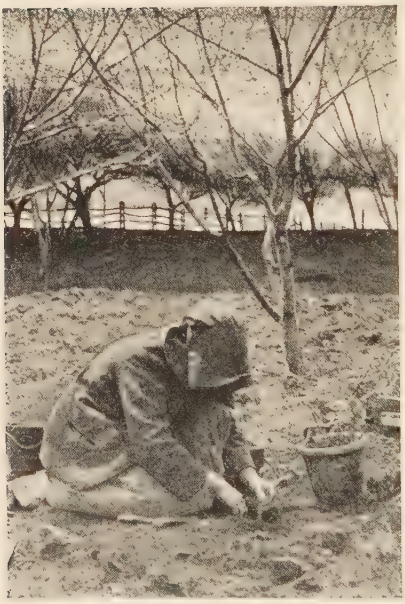
Cooper's death occurred in 1851, and his wife survived him only a few months. Otsego Hall was then sold, an extra story was added, and it was turned into a hotel. A heavy insurance was placed on the property and with very little delay it burned, after a manner that heavily insured buildings sometimes have of doing. The site of the old Hall is now a pleasing park, and where the house stood is a striking monu-

ment, but it seems a pity the house itself could not have been preserved just as Cooper left it. The novelist lies buried in the tree-shadowed quiet of a near churchyard, and the much-worn path to his grave, trodden by thousands of pilgrim feet, attests his abiding fame.

The Graves of J. Fenimore Cooper and his Wife

VI

AN HISTORIC TOWN IN CONNECTICUT



Setting out the House-plants

MY acquaintance with Saybrook began rather unpropitiously at its one hotel. This was a shapeless yellow structure, evidently an old residence somewhat remodelled and enlarged. Its busiest portion was the bar-room adorned with a heavy cherry counter and an imposing array of bottles on the shelves behind. When I entered the adjoining office, several men were in the bar-room running over their vocabularies of swear words in a high-voiced dispute; and in the office

itself sat two young fellows drowsing in drunken stupor. The whole place was permeated with the odors

Saybrook Street

of liquor and with tobacco fumes, both recent and of unknown antiquity.

But if the aspect of local life as seen at the hotel was depressing, the village, on the evening I arrived, was to my eyes quite entrancing. In the May twilight I walked from end to end of the long chief street. The birds were singing, and from the seaward marshes came the piping of the frogs and the purring monotone of the toads. Lines of great elms and sugar maples shadowed the walks, and the latter had blossomed so that every little twig had its tassels of delicate yellow-green, and a gentle fragrance filled the air. Among

other trees, a trifle retired, were many pleasant homes of the plain but handsome and substantial type in vogue about a century ago. In short, the place furnished an admirable example of the old New England country town, and imparted a delightful sense of repose and comfort.

The most incongruous feature of the village was an abnormal, modern schoolhouse that in its decorative trickery matched nothing else on the street. From this it was a relief to turn to the white, square-towered old church neighboring, which gave itself no airs and cut no capers with architectural frills and fixings. On its front was a bronze plate informing the reader that here was

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
IN SAYBROOK
ORGANIZED
IN "THE GREAT HALL" OF THE FORT
IN THE SUMMER OF 1646

Thus it was one of the earliest founded churches in the commonwealth.

An odd thing about the town, and one that rather offset its sentiment of antiquity, was the omnipresence of bicycles. Everybody — old and young, male and female — rode this thoroughly modern contrivance. Pedestrianism had apparently gone out of fashion, and I got the idea that the children learned to ride a wheel before they began to walk.

Another odd thing was that the village looked neither agricultural nor suburban. It is in truth the dwelling-place of a country aristocracy possessed of a good deal of wealth, and labor is not very strenuous. The people are content if they have sufficient capital safely invested to return them a comfortable living and save them the necessity for undue exertion. Yet, to quote a native, "They are nothing like as rich as they were fifty years ago."

Much money has been lost in one way and another. The decrease, however, is more due to removals and to the division of large individual properties among several heirs. But, whatever the ups and downs of fortune, the town apparently changes slowly, and the inhabitants cling to the customs of their forefathers. One evidence of this was the retention of miles and miles of unnecessary fences about the dwellings, some of them of close boards, suggestive of monastic seclusiveness.

The oldest house in the town that still presents in the main its original aspect dates back to 1665. It is painted a dingy yellow, and has a high front, from which the rear roof takes a long slant downward, until the eaves are within easy reach, and you have to stoop to go in at the back door. The windows have the tiny panes of the time when the dwelling was erected. The rooms all have warped floors, and low ceilings crossed by great beams; and the heavy vertical timbers

assert themselves in the corners. The upper story has only two apartments finished. As was usual in houses of this kind, the rest was left simply garret space bare to the rafters. In the heart of the structure is an enormous chimney that on the ground floor takes up the space of a small room. There are fireplaces on three sides, but their days of service are past, though they never have been closed except with fireboards.

In a Back Yard

At the rear of the house, under an apple tree, were two vinegar barrels, each of which had an inverted bottle stuck in the bung-hole. The contents of the barrels, in their cider state, had been allowed to freeze and then were drained off. A highly concentrated beverage was in this manner obtained, much esteemed

by the well-seasoned cider-lover. I was offered a chance to make the acquaintance of the liquor, yet not without warning that, as it was almost pure alcohol, there was some danger of overdoing the matter.

To the north of the town one does not have to follow the highways far to encounter country that, with all the years passed since the settlement of the region, is still only half tamed. Here are rocky hills, brushy pastures, and rude stone walls overgrown with poison ivy. Many of the homes are ancient and dilapidated and the premises strewn with careless litter. Work is carried on in a primitive fashion. A landowner of this district with whom I talked affirmed that farming did not pay, and the reason he gave was the competition of the West — it had knocked the bottom out of prices.

I wondered if there were not other reasons. He was furrowing out a half-acre patch on which he intended to plant potatoes. His hired man was leading the horse while he himself held the plough-handles. It seemed to me his patch was not large enough to work economically with a view to profit, and that the profit was also being dissipated by having two men do work that might be done by one. Down the slope was a long stretch of marshes that swept away to the sea, with a muddy-banked creek wandering through the level. The man said he would cut salt hay on these marshes later in the year, and as the soil was too boggy to bear

the weight of a horse, not only would the mowing have to be done by hand, but he and his helper would be obliged to carry the hay to firm land between them on poles. Here, again, it was not easy to discern much

Ploughing out for Potatoes

chance for profit. The process was too laborious where the product was of so little value. Then, at the man's home, I noted that the stable manure lay leaching in the sun and rain, unprotected by any roof, that the mowing-machine and other tools were scattered about the yard accumulating rust, and that things in general looked careless and easy-going. I did not wonder he took a pessimistic view of farming.

The places of many of his neighbors were akin to his, and as a whole this outlying district seemed a piece

out of the past when farming was done by main strength, and brains and method and science were quite secondary. This old-fashioned aspect was further emphasized by the presence of an occasional slow ox-team toiling in the fields, and now and then an antiquated well-sweep in a dooryard.

A well-sweep was an adjunct of one house in the town itself — a gray, square little house far gone in decay. Lights were missing from the windows, clapboards were dropping off, blinds were dilapidated or gone altogether, and the outbuildings had either fallen and been used for stove wood, or were on the verge of ruin. The shed used as a hen-house leaned at a perilous slant. Near

A Roadway on the Saybrook Outskirts

it was a scanty pile of wood and a sawhorse made by nailing a couple of sticks crosswise on the end of a box so that the tops projected above the box level and

formed a crotch. Along the street walk staggered a decrepit picket fence with a sagging gate. The yard was a chaos of weeds and riotous briers, and the place looked mysterious — as if it had a history — perhaps was haunted.

A tiny path led around to the back door, so slightly trodden I was in doubt whether the house was inhabited or not until I saw a bent old woman coming from the grass field at the rear of the premises. On her head she wore a sunbonnet of ancient type and over her shoulders a faded shawl. She was hobbling slowly along with the help of a cane, and bore on her arm a basket with a few dandelion greens in the bottom. I stood leaning on the fence, hoping chance would give me an opportunity to know more about this strange house; and to avoid an appearance of staring I now looked the other way. But my loitering had attracted the woman's attention, and, instead of going into the house, she set her basket on the back door-step and came feebly down the path and spoke to me. She was a mild-eyed, kindly old soul, and in the chat which followed I learned that she was eighty years old and that her brother, aged seventy-six, the only other member of the household, was a "joiner." Presently I asked about some of the garden flowers which had survived in their neglected struggle with weeds and brambles.

"They need the old woman," she said, "but I'm

most past such work now. My lameness is getting worse. I have it every winter, and it doesn't leave me until warm weather comes. I shall have to get my brother to hoe some here. He isn't much for taking care of flowers, but he likes 'em as well as any one, and if he's going to make a call, he'll pick a bunch to carry along. I used to have more kinds, and I'd keep some of 'em in the house through the winter, but when I did that I had to see the fire didn't go out nights, and it got too hard for me."

"What are those white flowers spreading all through the grass?" I inquired.

"Those are myrtle — white myrtle. Want one?"

My reply was affirmative, and I was invited into the yard. I picked a myrtle blossom and the old woman said, "You can have more just as well."

"Thank you, one will do; and what are these little flowers at my feet?"

"Those are bluebottles. I got the first plants from my cousin's up in Tolland County. Want one?"

"Yes, I believe I would like one."

"Take more if you care to."

"No, I'd rather have just the one. Here are some pink flowers in a bunch. What are they?"

"Those are polyanthus. You can have a root to take home with you if you can carry it."

Thus our talk rambled on, while we considered double violets, "daffies," bloodroot, mandrakes,

"chiny asters," tiger lilies, "pineys," tulips, hyacinths, etc. The garden had formerly been very tidy, and I could trace its decorative arrangement of beds and paths. The borders of the beds were outlined with rows of big "winkle" shells which the brother had brought up from the seashore a mile or two distant, where he sometimes went "clamming and oystering."

Close about the house were blue and yellow lilies, bunches of ferns, and a good deal of shrubbery, including roses, a "honeysuckle" bush, and a tall "lilack." This last carried its blossoms so high that they were far beyond the woman's reach as she stood on the ground, and she only picked such as she could gather from an upper window. Near the back door was a big butternut tree, and a grape-vine overrunning a shaky trellis. Here, too, was the well-sweep with its rickety curb and its oaken bucket.

I was made welcome to step inside the house and see the old dwelling, but I did not find it especially interesting. The barren, cluttered rooms, with their suggestion of extreme poverty, were depressing. In the parlor, which was used as a sort of storeroom, were a number of antiquated pictures on the walls, most of them in heavy frames that the woman had contrived herself — some of cones, some of shells stuck in putty. The cones and shells varied much in size and kind, and the patterns were intricate and ingenious. Then there was a specimen of hair work, dusty and moth-

eaten, which she took out of its frame that I might inspect it closer. "I used to be quite a hand making these sort of things," she explained, "but now I don't have the time. It's about all I can do to get enough to eat."

I came away wondering what the trouble was that the brother and sister were so poorly provided for in their old age, and when I inquired about it I was told that the brother was "one of the smartest men in Connecticut," an architect and builder of great ability, but "he had looked through the bottom of a glass too often."

The most historic portion of Saybrook is what is known as "The Point," a seaward-reaching projection a half-mile across, connected with the mainland by a narrow neck. Here the first settlers established themselves in 1635. The leaders who had planned this settlement had in October of that year reached Boston from across the sea. In Boston they collected twenty men, hired a small vessel, and about the middle of November posted off for the mouth of the Connecticut. They brought with them materials for the erection of houses to accommodate both themselves and others who were to follow; and they were prepared to construct a fort, in part to prevent the Dutch, who aspired to control the river, from accomplishing their purpose, and in part to defend themselves against the Indians.

They arrived none too soon; for a few days after

they landed, a vessel from New Amsterdam appeared off shore with intent to take possession of the region and build fortifications. Luckily the English had mounted a couple of cannon, and the Dutch thought best to return peaceably whence they had come. Winter soon set in, and the settlers could do little beforehand save to provide themselves with shelters of the most primitive kind. In the spring work was taken up in earnest, and other settlers came; but for a long time the colony grew very slowly, and the earliest years were years of annual struggle with the stubborn earth and the hard winters. One of the first tasks of the pioneers was to build a wooden fort and to set up a line of palisades twelve feet high across the neck of the peninsula. Like all the early towns, Saybrook suffered at the hands of the Indians. A number of its inhabitants were slain in the immediate vicinity, and the cows sometimes returned from the pasture with arrows sticking in their sides.

By 1647, while the population was still less than one hundred, a church was erected. Up to that time the meetings had been held in what the records speak of as "the great hall" of the fort. The church stood at one end of a public square called "The Green." To assemble the people for service a drum was beaten, and it was voted that at the front door of the church should be "a gard of 8 men every Sabbath and Lecture-day compleat in their arms." A sentinel, too,

was stationed on a turret or platform built on the meeting-house roof. The necessity of this protection against savage assaults is seen when one remembers that an average of over fourscore English are estimated to have been slain yearly by the Indians during the first half-century of Connecticut's settlement.

In the Old Cemetery

This seems distressing enough, but from an Indian viewpoint the slaughter was far worse ; for twenty of their number were killed to one of the whites.

A second meeting-house was completed in 1681 near the site of the first. Of this structure it is known that the seats in the body of the house were plain wooden benches assigned to members of the congrega-

tion according to age, rank, office, and estate. Several leading men were given permission to build square pews against the walls of the audience room, and the minister's family had a square pew at the right of the pulpit. The pulpit itself was a high, angular construction furnished with a Geneva Bible, a "Bay Psalm Book," and an hour-glass with which to time the service. The two deacons faced the congregation, sitting on a seat at the base of the pulpit, and the tithing-man, with his fox-tail rod of office, took his position where he could best oversee the behavior of the worshippers.

The original settlement at Saybrook Point about the fort gradually overflowed to the mainland, until presently the centre of population and chief village were a mile or two from the earlier hamlet. Thus, when the third church was built, in 1726, at a cost of sixteen hundred dollars, a new and more generally convenient location was chosen. Until near the end of the century this edifice had no steeple and no bell. After these were added it was customary, down to 1840, to ring the bell every noon to announce to the people the arrival of the dinner hour. The bell was also rung during the winter at nine in the evening as a notification it was bedtime. Neither of the previous churches were ever warmed, nor was this for more than one hundred years. The chief feature of the interior was the high pulpit, overhung by a huge sounding-board, both much elaborated with panels and mouldings. On Sunday the pulpit stairs

were filled by small boys, who were always eager to get the upper step, for this position gave the occupant the honor of opening the pulpit door to the minister when he ascended to his place. The pews were square, with seats on three sides, so that a portion of the worshippers sat with sides or backs to the preacher. A wide, heavy gallery extended clear around the room except on the north, where rose the pulpit. The east wing of the gallery was exclusively for females, the west for males. The front tier of seats was reserved for the singers. Behind them, on the south side, were four box pews regarded by many as most desirable sittings. Some of the young people of both sexes found these especially attractive, though more because the seclusion was adapted for social purposes than because of any religious ardor. Finally, in each of the remote rear corners of the gallery was still another box pew for the occupancy of the colored people, who were not allowed to sit elsewhere.

Perhaps Saybrook's strongest appeal to fame is the fact that the town was the first domicile of Yale University. It was characteristic of the settlers of New England, that no sooner had they set up their houses on American soil than they began to make provision for the education of their children. Not content with establishing primary schools, they founded Harvard College within seven years of the settlement of Boston. Connecticut, in proportion to its population and means, bore its full share in Harvard's support; but after the

lapse of some fifty years the people of the colony began to feel the need of having a collegiate school of their own. The idea took definite form at a meeting of Connecticut pastors in September, 1701, when each one present made a gift of books to the proposed college.

The infant institution, which, in honor of a generous benefactor, subsequently took the name of Yale, was thus started, and shortly a citizen of Saybrook gave it the use of a house and lot. This house was quite sufficient, for during the first six months the college community consisted of the president and a single student, and only fifty-five young men were graduated in fifteen years. The trustees were far from unanimous in locating the college at Saybrook, and its affairs continued in an unsettled state until 1716, when it was transferred to New Haven. The change was not accomplished without turmoil, a curious account of which is found in the Rev. Samuel Peters's "General History of Connecticut," published in 1781. He says:—

"A vote passed at Hartford, to remove the College to Weathersfield; and another at Newhaven, that it should be removed to that town. Hartford, in order to carry its vote into execution, prepared teams, boats, and a mob, and privately set off for Saybrook, and seized upon the College apparatus, library and students, and carried all to Weathersfield. This redoubled the

Cleaning up the Back Yard

jealousy of the saints at Newhaven, who thereupon determined to fulfil their vote; and accordingly, having collected a mob sufficient for the enterprise, they set out for Weathersfield, where they seized by surprise the students, library, &c. &c. But on the road to Newhaven, they were overtaken by the Hartford mob, who, however, after an unhappy battle, were obliged to retire with only a part of the library and part of the students. The quarrel increased daily, everybody expecting a war; and no doubt such would have been the case had not the peacemakers of Massachusetts Bay interposed with their usual friendship, and advised their dear friends of Hartford to give up the College to Newhaven. This was accordingly done to the great joy of the crafty Massachusetts, who always greedily seek their own prosperity, though it ruin their best neighbors.

"The College being thus fixed forty miles further west from Boston than it was before, tended greatly to the interest of Harvard College; for Saybrook and Hartford, out of pure grief, sent their sons to Harvard, instead of the College at Newhaven."

Another anecdote related by Mr. Peters has to do with the visit of the evangelist George Whitefield to Saybrook in 1740. "Time not having destroyed the walls of the fort," says the narrative, "Mr. Whitefield attempted to bring them down, as Joshua brought down the walls of Jericho, to convince the gaping

multitude of his divine mission. He walked several times round the fort with prayer, and rams'-horns blowing; he called on the angel of Joshua; but the angel was deaf or on a journey or asleep, and therefore the walls remained. Hereupon George cried aloud: 'This town is accursed for not receiving the messenger of the Lord; therefore the angel is departed and the walls shall stand as a monument of sinful people.' He shook off the dust of his feet against them, and departed."

The author of the "General History" was a Royalist clergyman driven by persecution from the colonies early in the Revolution. He writes with a certain amount of sarcasm and bitterness, yet the book is by no means wholly condemnatory. He apparently attempts to be fair, though his own experience and his affinity with the English Church gives a bias to his opinions. The part of his book which has been most severely criticised is where he gives a list of Connecticut "blue laws, that is bloody laws," which he affirms were strenuously enforced though never printed, and those who transgressed them were punished with excommunication, fines, banishment, whippings, ear-cropping, tongue-burning, and even death. I quote only a few of these alleged blue laws.

"No one shall run on the Sabbath-day, or walk in his garden or elsewhere, except reverently to and from meeting.

"No one shall kiss her child on the Sabbath or fasting-day.

"The Sabbath shall begin at sunset on Saturday.

"Whoever wears cloathes trimmed with gold, silver, or bone lace, above two shillings by the yard, shall be presented by the grand jurors.

"A debtor in prison, swearing he has no estate shall be let out and sold to make satisfaction.

"Whoever brings cards or dice into this dominion shall pay a fine of 5*l.*

"No one shall read Common-Prayer, keep Christmas or Saints-days, make minced pies, dance, play cards, or play on any instrument of music, except the drum, trumpet, and jewsharp.

"No man shall court a maid in person, or by letter, without first obtaining the consent of her parents.

"Every male shall have his hair cut round according to a cap."

This last law, Mr. Peters says, was the cause of all New Englanders being given the nickname of "pumpkin-heads." It frequently was convenient, he adds, when caps were lacking, to substitute the hard shell of a pumpkin, "which being put on the head every Saturday, the hair is cut by the shell all round the head." The author's comment is that there is much "prudence" in this method of hair-trimming, for: "first, it prevents the hair from snarling; secondly, it saves the use of combs, bags, and ribbons; thirdly, the hair

cannot incommode the eyes by falling over them; and fourthly, such persons as have lost their ears for heresy and other wickedness, cannot conceal their misfortune and disgrace."

Other paragraphs from the "General History" purporting to show the life of early Connecticut are these: —

"On Saturday evenings the people look sour and sad; on the Sabbath they appear to have lost their dearest friends, and are almost speechless; they walk softly; they even observe it with more exactness than did the Jews. A Quaker preacher told them with much truth that they worshipped the Sabbath, and not the God of the Sabbath. These hospitable people, without charity, condemned the Quaker as a blasphemer of the holy Sabbath, fined, tarred and feathered him, put a rope about his neck, and plunged him into the sea, but he escaped with life, though he was about seventy years of age.

"In 1750 an Episcopal clergyman, born and educated in England, who had been in holy orders above twenty years, once broke their sabbatical law by combing a discomposed lock of hair on the top of his wig; at another time for making a humming noise, which they call whistling; at a third, by running into church when it rained; at a fourth, by walking in his garden and picking a bunch of grapes: for which several crimes he had warrants granted against him,

was seized, brought to trial, and paid a considerable sum of money.

"Smuggling is rivetted in the constitution and practice of the inhabitants of Connecticut as much as superstition and religion, and their province is a storehouse for the smugglers of the neighboring colonies. They conscientiously study to cheat the King of those duties which they say God and Nature never intended should be paid. From the Governor down to the tithing-man who are sworn to support the laws, they will aid smugglers, resist collectors, and mob informers."

The writer's view of the colonial clergy is far from flattering. When a church gives a man a call and states the salary and other inducements, the prospective pastor, "after looking round him and finding no better terms offered from any other parish, answers in this manner, 'Brethren and friends, I have considered your call, and, after many fastings and prayers, I find it to be a call of God, and close with your offer.'"

The pastor's manner of visiting persons who are ill is described thus: "The minister demands of the sick if he be converted, when, and where. If the answer is conformable to the system of the minister, it is very well; if not, the sick is given over as a non-elect and no object of prayer. Another minister is then sent for, who asks the sick if he be willing to die, if he be willing to be damned, if it please God to damn him?

Should he answer No, this minister quits him, as the former. Finally the sick man dies, and so falls out of their hands into better."

In all this a touch of exaggeration is evident, yet there is enough of fact and of human nature behind it to make the reader enjoy its spice, and the narrative is far from unpalatable — at least to readers who are not natives of Connecticut.

The Seaward Marshlands

VII

A JAUNT ON LONG ISLAND

Starting the Garden Parsnips

FROM New York, one hot day in May, I journeyed almost the full length of Long Island's low levels; and so utterly lacking were hills and vales that I could not help fancying the entire isle had originally been mere mud flats, the delta of some great river. The soil was evidently mellow and easily cultivated, and I had glimpses from the car windows of many prosperous-looking market-garden farms; but not less characteristic were the monotonous stretches

of waste lands growing to pines and scrubby oaks. These were often uninterrupted for miles, and when a break occurred, it was only to allow for a village oasis with a ragged skirting of fields, and then the dwarfish forest swept on again. The woods were dry, and truant fires were burning in them, sometimes so near I could see the low, irregular lines of the flames, sometimes distant and only made apparent by a cloud-drift of yellow smoke.

I went as far as Easthampton, a place I had selected for my destination solely because I had heard there were windmills in or near it — not our ugly modern ones, with angular skeleton frames and a whirligig of shutters at the top, but those of the portly Dutch type, that spread to the wind long, white-sailed arms. To harmonize with these windmills I had in mind an old-fashioned rural town, in whose quiet the past would seem more real than the present. I was disappointed. The town has been invaded by the city people, and is suburban rather than rural, and the old survives only in nooks and corners; and yet the place is beautiful. It has a straight, broad, two-mile street, lined with well-grown elms, and where the early town centre had been the street widens into a grassy common. The sea lies just beyond sight, hidden by a bulwark of dunes, but its muffled roar along the beach can be distinctly heard.

The common at one end dips down to a muddy pond, and on the steep, short slope rising east of the

A Long Island Stile

pond is a cemetery of lowly gray stones. As soon as you pass across the burial-ground you find a windmill — a great octagon, with unpainted, shingled sides, and four wide-reaching arms. The windwill fulfilled my ideal very satisfactorily, and its situation adjoining the ancient cemetery was charming. All it lacked was motion, and I learned with regret it was not likely to have that for several days.

"These mills don't grind much but hog feed," said my informant, "and there ain't but mighty little business doing at this season. The West raises our grain supplies now and we buy 'em ready ground, but the windmills used to be pretty important institutions. You see there ain't any water-power worth mentioning in this flat country, and in the old advertisements when a place was for sale they'd mention how far it was from a windmill, just as they would at present from the post office and railroad."

At the very end of the street to the north was another windmill, and on a side way was a third, minus arms, while a fourth, that looked outwardly the best of all, stood in the back yard of a gentleman's place. This last mill, however, was only a delusion — a fad of its city owner. It was naught but an imitation shell, fitted up to serve as a home for a hired man, and its great arms never bore sails, nor could the wind coax them into motion even when it blew a hurricane.

Of the evolution of the town into what it is at

present I received a most entertaining view from a man I accosted who was scratching up leaves and rubbish by the path side in front of his premises with a rake. He was in no haste, and talking seemed to suit him rather better than the work in hand.

"It's twenty-seven years ago that the first city family rented a house here," said he. "Now the town is become one of the city people's resorts, and it's full of houses they have either put up or that they rent. Their houses are built in city style, and the old farm-houses have about all been done away with or so made over you wouldn't know 'em. Yes, farming's dying out, and I expect soon you won't see a load of manure go through the street in a whole season.

"The original inhabitants find themselves swallowed up in the deluge, and I must say we're a little dismayed at the transformation. We're old-fashioned enough not to quite like it. We used to do as we pleased. There was a time when, if we thought a person needed a coat of tar and feathers, we saw that he had it. 'Twouldn't be allowed now. The city people are getting so that they direct all our ways — almost tell us when to go to bed and when to get up in the morning.

"I rent my house from the middle of June to the middle of October for six hundred dollars. Some o' the neighbors rent theirs for less, others for more, even up to twenty-five hundred. I have to move out when

the city folks come, but that little house you see in back there is good enough for me; and I sell the renters chickens, eggs, and garden truck, and it ain't much trouble to make a living. There's more money in renting than there is in taking boarders. Boarding ain't fashionable here. I'll tell you why. One o' these city women that has stopped here makes a call there in New York, and says she spent last summer down at Easthampton.

"'Did you, and what cottage did you have?' says the other.

"'Oh, we didn't have a cottage. We boarded.'

"'M-m-m, ah! Well, you needn't call any more.'

"At least that's what it amounts to. There's a good deal of caste feeling, and renters don't want to associate too freely with boarders. I expect pretty soon they won't go in bathing here on the beach at the same place.

"We've had a great excitement in the town the last few months over a kind of epidemic of sickness. Our two doctors don't agree what it is, and one of 'em has doctored for typhoid and the other for malaria. Neither of 'em has lost a patient, and the undertaker has been kicking all winter because the people didn't die faster — said he couldn't make a living the way things were going. Well, the town is rent in twain, and each doctor has his party. There's most feeling though against the typhoid man. You see the promulgation of his theory would tend to keep the city people away.

"We couldn't stand that. They're the mainstay of the town, because, as I said, farming's pretty much played out. It used to be different, and you have no

On Easthampton Common

idea what crops we'd raise. The soil's nothing to brag of, but we'd put on enormous quantities of bunkers; that's a kind of fish — I suppose you know what they are. We could go down to the sea anywhere and drag in our seines full of them bunkers, and then we'd cover the land till it glistened all over with 'em; and how they would stink! I can remember times when, on a hot Sunday, we'd have to close the meeting-house windows to keep out the stench.

"I wish that meeting-house was here now. It was

a handsome old church, but it got too small, and instead of enlarging it, they must build a new one in up-to-date style. You can see the doorstone of the old church yet, embedded in the sidewalk down below here a ways. There's a curious story of how the building happened to be put in that particular place. The townspeople had been having a great dispute as to where it should stand, and they couldn't arrive at any agreement. So they had to get three disinterested men to come from towns around to decide. It was winter, and each man was lodged with a different family. Well, the three men were to get together in the evening to talk over the matter; and after supper, about the time it got dark, one of 'em sent word to the others where they were to meet by a colored girl that worked in the house he was staying at. The night was stormy — snow and cold and a high wind — and it was too much for the girl. They found her next day dead in a drift, and on the spot where she died the three men decided the church should stand, and not a person in town dissented."

At this point in my companion's discourse a young woman came along and accosted him with, "Oh, father, where do you think I've been?"

"I don't know. Where have you?" said he.

"Over to Mr. Delancey's house. He invited me in to see the paper he's put on the hall, and I told him just what I thought. 'I ain't stuck on it at all,' I said."

"This gentleman is interested in old times," remarked her father, indicating me.

"Are you?" said she. "It's too bad old Lew Dudley ain't alive. He knew more about old times than all the rest of the town put together."

"I don't suppose he would have talked with a stranger, he was so cranky," commented the father.

"He was a queer old codger," continued the young woman, "and he got worse than ever in his later years while he was living all by his lone; and what a man he was for lawsuits! He never could do business without suing to get his rights. Then he was a great hand for marrying. Gee! it was astonishing the number of wives he had, one after the other. Some died and some got divorced. One of 'em died when I was a little girl, and I remember they kept the body a week or ten days. She looked so natural they weren't sure but she was alive. The wife he had last didn't stay with him only by spells. She was a city woman, and she got lonesome here and had to go off to New York every once in a while, to keep from perishing. They had a regular cat and dog time of it anyway, and once Old Lew came to our house with a paper he wanted us to sign. I read it and it made out his wife was crazy, and I said, 'You bring a paper that says you're both crazy, and I'll sign that quick.' Well, I must be going."

When the daughter turned away, the man with the

rake pointed to a fine old colonial dwelling not far away, high in front and low behind, with a great chimney. "That," said he, "is the house which inspired 'Home, Sweet Home.' It is the birthplace of John Howard Payne."

I looked at the structure more closely, later, and found its air of repose and rustic simplicity quite in accord with the sentiment of the famous verses; but a dwelling that interested me more was the "Dan

The "Home, Sweet Home" House

Watkins House" on the town outskirts. It was ancient and gray, with shingled sides and many odd projections and angles. In the dooryard, amidst other wreckage, was an old surf boat with a broken prow. I ventured into the yard, and a bevy of geese sounded the alarm. When I did not retreat they came honk-

ing up to me, and the gander made a personal examination, nosing me over, nibbling at my shoes, and showing decided marks of disapproval. Behind the house was a long garden enclosed by a shaky picket fence. As I approached, a tattered old man rose from his knees, where he had been carefully sowing with his fingers a row of parsnips. He wore spectacles and had a white, bushy beard.

"Them geese ain't very polite," said he. "They got queer ideas o' their importance, and kind o' boss this whole place. Sometimes I don't know whether I keep the geese or they keep me. There's one thing about 'em, though — they're better'n any watch-dog I ever see. Can't nobody come around here but they know it. Take it the middle o' the night, it's just the same. Everything'll be all quiet, and at the least little noise they'll speak right out as if they were awake all the time. You know that old story about the geese saving Rome from the enemy by giving warning. I ain't a bit of doubt but what that was so."

Where the man was at work he had a line stretched between two stakes to guide him in making his rows straight. He had been putting in a variety of seeds, and at the end of each little plot had set up a twig with the seed envelope on top to indicate what was planted there. He was doing a very neat job. Through the middle of the garden ran a row of perennials — rhubarb, sage, white raspberries, and currants.

"I have a good min' to root out those currants," the old man remarked, "I'm so dretful pestered with the worms. I've put on hellebore till I'm tired, and the worms get the best of me every year. I don't care much for currants anyway. My white raspberries I favor more, though I have to be everlastingly fightin' all the time to keep 'em from spreadin' over everything. They furnish me all the berries I want myself, and I let the neighbors pick 'em, too."

"I suppose your house is one of the oldest in town," said I.

"Oh, law, no! This is a new house. It was only built one hundred and forty years ago. Easthampton's got houses two hundred years old and over."

He had come out of the garden now and was getting a drink at his pump. This pump was close by the back door, a venerable and clumsy affair made of white ash logs which he affirmed had been bored and put in three-quarters of a century before. "I don't want anything better'n that pump and that water," he continued, as he hung the tin cup back on its nail. "They're talkin' about havin' waterworks with pipes run into every house, but I won't let 'em come in here."

"Have you a farm?" I inquired.

"No, I ain't a farmer. I'm an old watchmaker; but I do carpentering and other things, too; and there was a time when I pulled teeth and took daguerro-

types. You come into the house and I'll show you where I work."

He conducted me first to a black little room, its sides and ceiling lined with tools and pieces of wood and iron of all kinds, the gatherings of generations. Here he was accustomed to labor as a sort of Jack of all trades, but paid special attention to making hickory axe-helves, and could not mention machine-made helves without snorting at their worthlessness.

"My watch business I do at the other end of the house," said he, and led the way through several low, wainscoted rooms. Finally we came to a door in a room corner, and this door was so narrow, a person inclined to stoutness would have found it impassable. It looked as if it might give access to some secret passage, but in reality it opened on a rough little entry from which we stepped into the tiniest box of a shop imaginable. The apartment was heated by a small fireplace, and was furnished with benches and shelves, a stool or two, and a miscellany of delicate tools, watches, and pieces of clocks.

"When I was a young man," confided the old watchmaker, "I was offered big wages and a place in a large jewellery store; but I don't want to be tied to any one. Here I can work or not as I darn please, and it suits me."

Among other things he showed an oddly decorated gold-faced watch which he said had belonged to his

An Old-fashioned Sitting Room

uncle, the captain of a Sag Harbor whaling vessel. His mention of the old port reminded me that it was not far distant — only seven miles — and I determined to see it. Accordingly, on the following morning, I

hired a buggy for conveyance and a boy to drive me over. The road was the sandiest, ruttiest, and dustiest I have ever travelled, and I would have fancied it never received any attention, had we not come across an old Irishman laboriously digging out turf from the wayside and heaving it into the wheel tracks. He adjusted the turf as he went along into a hummocky causeway that all teams scrupulously avoided.

Nearly our whole journey was through a desolation of burnt woods. The oaks were all stark dead, but the pines had withstood the fire better, probably because there was less around their bases for the flames to lick up. The fire had occurred the previous year, and my driver had gone to it. He never wanted to go to another. It used him up. The wind blew and the fire leaped the roadways and went as fast as a man could run. They had hard work saving the farm-houses in and near the woods.

Some of the districts on the route had such names as Hardscrabble and Snooksville and these names seemed quite in keeping with the nature of the road. It was a main highway, yet it was one of those privately-owned mementos of the past — a toll-road, and we had to stop at a wayside cabin guarding a gate, and pay seven cents for driving over its purgatory. The gate was hung on a post opposite the door in the house where the toll was collected. I noticed it was open when we approached, and that there was no sign

of closing it after we had driven on. My idea had been that toll-gates were ordinarily kept shut, and only opened to allow travellers to pass after they had paid toll.

"No," said my driver, "it's open all the time except it might be when a tough customer comes along that they think likely'll kick up a row. It's open all night, too, and if the toll-gate people have gone to bed you just drive through without paying."

A Toll-gate on a Seven Cent Road

Presently we reached Sag Harbor, and my driver turned back, while I started out for a ramble about the town. The days of the whale fishery were Sag Harbor's golden period. Since then it has never

amounted to much. Still, it appeared to me fairly prosperous and its houses comfortable and well kept. I only observed one relic of the old days that seemed melancholy — a stately mansion heavily shadowed by trees. It was of the Greek temple style, with a lofty, pillared front; but its glory had long since departed, and it was now dingy and out of repair, and had a mildewed, ghostly look as if a blight was on it.

A short distance beyond, on the same street, a tall, bony old man was working at a large buttonball tree he had cut down. It had fallen across the highway and the top reached the opposite curbing. As the man chopped off the branches he trimmed the brush from each in turn, and seemed quite oblivious to any need of haste in opening the street to traffic. Some teams turned around and sought another thoroughfare; others joggled up over the curbing and drove along on the sidewalk. After a while a man approached with a load of brick. He alighted and came to look at the débris. The axeman was pecking away at the brush.

"See here, Uncle Matthew," said the newcomer, "why don't you cut off these top branches so teams can go past?"

"Wal, I'm agoin' tew."

"But you no need to trim all the brush first."

"Naow, look a' here, I'm adewin' of this job, ain't I? If you're in a hurry, drive along on the sidewalk same as other folks dew."

"But I got a ton and a half o' brick on."

"That don't make no dif'rence."

"It'd smash my wagon all to flinders. I'll take hold here and help, and you can make a road through inside o' five minutes."

The man began to pull some of the small limbs to one side.

"Naow, yew jes' stop that air," exclaimed Uncle Matthew. "Yew're mixin' everythin' all up. Yew ac' like yew was crazy."

The two were still disputing when I left, but Uncle Matthew was having his way. I went down to the harbor. A single long wharf reached out into its tranquil waters, and there was no sign of its ever being enlivened by much traffic. I wandered along the shore with its drift deposits of seaweed and shells. At one place two men were overhauling a net with the intention of going out to drag it toward evening. At another were several children playing in the sand and half burying themselves in it. They had been wading in the shallows and fishing with tackle improvised from willow rods, string, and bent pins. One boy had boasted he dared wade out farther than the others, and he had tripped and ducked in all over. His jacket was spread out to dry on the sand, and he was shivering in the wind.

I had been disappointed in not finding the Easthampton windmills at work, and when a Sag Harborite

acquaintance informed me that a mill at Bridgehampton was usually busy the year round, I departed in search of it on the next train. Like most of the old shore towns, Bridgehampton is a resort of the city summer people to the loss of much of its rural character. However, two white churches of the old régime remain, and, on the village borders, are farm-houses not yet spoiled by modern quirks in architectural improvement or distortion. Some of these outlying houses were in themselves and all their surroundings hardly changed from what was usual fifty years ago. They have retained the big chimneys, and the small-paned windows, the yards are enclosed by lichened quarter-board or picket fences, and the hens are always lingering close about the house and scratching holes under the shrubbery.

An old dwelling of this sort has a small front yard with a path running straight down the middle from the front door to the gate, and it has a big side yard with a narrow gate for pedestrians that is more or less disregarded, and a wide gate for wagons. In the workaday larger yard is not a little of the paraphernalia of labor in the form of machines and vehicles, especially those whose best days are past, and there are piles of wood, and very likely a few score chestnut fence posts with holes cut in them for the insertion of rails. Conveniently near the kitchen door is pretty sure to be a well and a pump with a line of trough extending toward the barn-yard.

Making Fence Posts

The old mill that I had come to seek I presently found; and though the arms were bare and the machinery silent, I was encouraged to discover the door open. I went in and sat down on some bags. It was a dusty, cobwebby structure knitted stoutly together with great beams and a multitude of braces and cross-pieces. While I was looking about and accustoming my eyes to the gloom, a man entered the door.

"Ah, ha! now I've ketched ye," he said; but his tones were not as alarming as his words, and I was welcome.

He was just about to start the mill. The day had been too quiet earlier, but the wind was now freshening. A wide platform encircled the structure, and, standing on that, the miller one by one unfurled the canvas sails rolled up on the slatted arms and fastened them in position. Then he let the arms free and they began to revolve and started the millstones to grinding the corn, while he went inside and stood fondling the meal in his hand as it came sifting down the spout from above.

The mill had four stories. In the second were the hoppers; the third was for storage, and the topmost, a greasy place up in the revolving cap, was nearly filled by the big wooden wheels, shafts, and brakes. How its upper portions did creak and shake! I could appreciate the necessity for the strong sinews of heavy and close-set timbers. Only one of the two pairs of

millstones was employed to-day, for there was not much grist; but both were busy all through the winter,

A Windmiller

and even then they failed to keep up with orders, and the miller said he sometimes had three hundred bushels

ahead of him. The arms measured sixty-eight feet from tip to tip, and were capable of developing energy to the amount of forty horse-power. It takes a fair breeze to set them in effective motion; and yet, in a gale, they will grind without sails.

I loitered for hours in and about the old mill, exploring the interior and watching from the fields the stately revolutions of its white arms; and I came away satisfied, and left Long Island with the feeling that its ancient windmills constitute one of the most picturesque features in architecture to be found in all America.

Along Shore at Sag Harbor

VIII

LIFE ON A GREEN MOUNTAIN TOP

Tinkering the Road

WHATEVER road you travel in the remote New England town of Norton you are in the woods. Occasionally you come on a little farm in a stony clearing, but the diminutive fields are soon passed and then the interminable forest closes in again. A narrow-gauge railroad touches the eastern borders of the town, yet it does not affect the town life perceptibly, for it winds through a deep valley

a thousand feet below the level of the scattered homes, and the highway that climbs up from the valley is a zigzag of the steepest sort which the mountain folk themselves avoid when they can. This road gullies badly in rains, and now and then portions of the bank on one side or the other slide down in the wheel-tracks, bringing with them a clump of trees and bushes that have to be cut away before the road is passable.

If you go westerly over the range on whose top lies the town, you find another railroad and the large manufacturing village of Milldale, but it is a long distance thither, and the descent from the uplands is almost as violently steep as that on the east. To the north and south the routes are gentler, but these only conduct you to other little woodland towns situated, like Norton, on the broad mountain summit; and you toil over a never-ending upheaval of hills by roads often precipitous and stony, and interrupted by countless thank-you-marms.

Norton township contains no village. It has not even a store. The post-office is in a farm-house, and there are three mails a week. The butcher, the baker, and the grocer make no rounds and most of the trading is done at Milldale; yet the hard journey to the valley is undertaken so seldom that whoever drives down is pretty sure to be intrusted with many errands by the neighbors. The town hall at Norton is in the heart of the woods, hemmed in on every side, and there

is no other building in sight. A mile farther on is the church, on the borders of a very considerable open that forms the domain of a lone farm-house just over a ridge out of sight.

The town has two widely separated schoolhouses — the "White" and the "Holler." The former is on a hilltop where four roads meet. For ten or fifteen years the building has been painted brown, but previously it had always been white, and the name has remained, though the color has changed. It is snuggled in the edge of a bushy wood, facing some ragged pastures and cultivated fields. Close by is a neglected cemetery, full of tottering and fallen stones, which nature is fast enveloping in weeds and bushes, and down the hill are two houses. From the height where the school building is perched can be seen several other cleared patches amid the forest and a number of homes — "Martin's, Jake's, Dan's, Elihu's," etc. The mountain people do not use surnames, nor on ordinary occasions do they have use for Mr., Mrs., or Miss. When a recent teacher from a distance took charge of the "Holler" schoolhouse, and, unwitting of the ways of the hill folks, addressed certain of the girls who were as large, if not as old, as she, with the prefix of Miss, they were offended. It seemed to them she was putting on airs.

The Holler schoolhouse is buried much more completely in the woods than the White schoolhouse. The

wild berry vines and the bushes have overgrown all the space about except a narrow strip in front next the road.

At the Schoolhouse Door

Immediately beyond the highway is a swift, noisy little river, and beyond that the forest again. The children

are very fond of the stream, and, during the barefoot days of warm weather they are always wading and paddling about in it. The bottom is full of slippery stones, and not infrequently a child will souse in all over and have to go home to dry off.

The teacher sweeps out after school, and she comes early enough in the morning to start the fire, though it has sometimes happened, when she was later than usual, that the boys have crawled in through a window and started it. The windows are supposed to be fastened, but as the fastening consists of nails the teacher sticks in above the sash, an entrance is easily forced. The teacher boards a mile up the river, and the road she traverses is for the whole distance through the damp, cool woods with the crystal trout stream singing along beside it. She has to carry her dinner, as do all her scholars, for none of them live near enough to go home at noon.

Norton's wealth, such as it is, depends almost entirely on forest craft; and the chief factor in determining the worth of a farm is the character of its woodland. Spruce is the most valuable timber, with fir, or "balsam" as it is called, pine, and hemlock following after. Beech and maple are plenty, but the price hardwood brings scarcely repays the expense of getting it out. As for cord wood, large towns are too far distant to allow its profitable marketing. Of the crops that can be grown, potatoes seem best adapted to the mountain soil, but

the ground is rough and inclined to bogginess. Worst of all, it is full of stones, and though vast quantities are carted off and dumped out of the way or made into stone walls the plough every year brings up more. Where a ledge is encountered, or a boulder too large to move, cairns of loose stones are likely to be piled around it, and among the débris grow clumps of bushes and perhaps a wild apple tree or two.

Few of the upland inhabitants seemed to be admirers of their environment. In the words of one of them, who declared he expressed the general opinion, "It's a poor place, poor homes, poor everything, and the people here now are only waiting for a decent chance to sell out and get away."

But buyers are scarce, and it has to be a farm of exceptional merits that will bring more than a thousand dollars with the house and barn thrown in. One of the latest sales was of a place of two hundred and fifty acres. Some good woodland was included, but the buildings were practically worthless. It was sold for taxes, which at the rate of two and one-fourth per cent had accumulated until the whole amounted to sixty dollars. When these had been deducted from the sum realized, and a three hundred dollar mortgage had been liquidated, only forty dollars remained.

In accord with the mountains' most flourishing industry, sawmills occur at intervals on every vigorous stream — weatherworn, unpainted structures with

A Trout Stream

a great penstock bringing water from the dam above, and round about them a chaos of logs, piles of boards, slabs, sawdust, and rubbish. Sometimes this litter of lumber does not keep to the mill site, but is strewn along the road for half a mile.

While I was in Norton a portable sawmill was set up far back from the highway in the woods, and one dull morning I paid it a visit. The mist enveloped the uplands and made the forest vistas soft and mysterious. It was the first of June, and in the wet ravine were lady's-slippers coming into bloom, and there were enough Jack-in-the-pulpits along the forest path I followed to supply all the vernal congregations for miles around. Where the woods had been cut off were sometimes jungles of high-bush blackberries, or thickets of wild cherry snowed over with blossoms; but the ordinary undergrowth was apt to be largely composed of hobble-bush, whose straggling branches, with their tendency to form loops by taking root, give the bush its name and make it a great nuisance to the lumbermen. It was still full of white flower clusters, though these were past their prime.

In a mountain hollow, which a long-undisturbed spruce wood kept in high-columned twilight, I found the sawmill. It was a rude framework, with a broad roof over the portion that contained the engine. Work had just begun, and as yet only a small space right about the mill had been cleared, but the whole tract would be laid low and sawed during the summer. After the lumbermen had finished, the land would be valueless, unless some farmer would give a few dollars for it with the idea of burning the brush, and converting the denuded forest into pasturage. With the fine growth of

spruce still standing it was worth sixty or seventy dollars an acre, which was probably as much as any tract in town would bring, and certainly exceeded by far the worth of any cultivated farm land.

When I left the sawmill in the woods I took another route than that by which I came, and presently walked out into a rough pasture. There I met a barefoot little girl going homeward, with her hands full of painted trillium — "pappooses," she called them. We went on together, and after I had to some extent succeeded in overcoming her shyness, she told me the names of the flowers we saw along the way, among the rest "swamp cheese," foam flower, white and blue violets, and "shads," more familiar to me as "shad-blows." The first of the list was the azalea, as yet only in bud.

I asked the little girl if she liked living in Norton, and she replied she did; but she knew very little about other places. Once her father had taken her and her brother to the circus in Milldale, and it was plain from what she said that both the circus and the town itself had seemed quite wonderful. The numerous houses, the many streets, and the crowds of people, however, were bewildering; and she was glad when they got home after a long night drive up the mountain and through the dark woods.

"Would you like a cud of gum?" inquired the girl at length, fumbling in her pocket and producing several

brown lumps. "I got it off a spruce tree near where I picked the pappooses."

"Does every one call the gum they chew a cud?" I questioned.

"No, some say a chaw, and some say a quid, but the children at school mostly says a cud."

"What is that bird we hear singing now — or whistling — one low note and several high notes?" I asked.

"A fiddler bird, the teacher calls it," was the reponse. "Teacher says it says, 'Here I come fiddling, fiddling'; and the children at school they say it says, 'Rejoice and be glad,' and teacher says the robins say, 'Ephraim Gillet, the sky is skillet, scour it bright, scour it clean.'"

The fiddler bird, or white-throated sparrow, to which we had been listening, visits most parts of New England only in its spring and autumn migrations, but it is a summer bird in the mountains, and I often heard its ringing whistle. Some fancy it cries, "I, I, peabody, peabody," whence comes still another of its names — peabody bird. None of our songsters has a call more powerful and individual.

My companion informed me she had looked out the back door early that morning, and a deer was feeding in plain view on the edge of the woods. This seemed a very natural incident when I saw the situation of the house. It was a little brown dwelling, amid some meagre, forest-girded fields, and was out of sight

of all travel, at the end of a grassy byway. The seclusion was complete. There were only three in the family, and I found the other two members — the father and a small boy — loading a wagon with evergreen boughs that had been piled about the base of the house during the winter to keep out the cold.

I spoke with them, and after a short chat the man suggested we should go indoors. Accordingly we adjourned to the kitchen, where he spent an hour entertaining me. The room was in much disorder. There was litter and grime everywhere, and the remains of the breakfast and the unwashed dishes were still on the table, although it was nearly noon. The ceiling was stained with leakage, and two or three great patches of plastering had fallen, while the floor was uneven, and so worn that the knots and nails stood up in warty eminences all over it. Through an open door at the rear of the kitchen I could see out into a shed — a gloomy apartment, hung about with garments and rags, pieces of harness, tools, and accumulations of household wreckage. Under foot was a scattering of stove wood, mostly tough and knotty sticks, that looked as if they had escaped the fire because they resisted splitting so strenuously. Horace Stogy — that was my host's name — was not a very forehanded farmer, and if he had sufficient stove wood for immediate needs he took no anxious thought for the morrow.

THE FIDDLER

Mr. Stogy proved to be a musical enthusiast, and soon produced a beloved "fiddle" to show me. It was a really fine instrument, and he played it with delicacy and feeling. He also possessed a piano — the only one in town. It stood next the kitchen sink, with its legs protected from damage by newspapers tied around them. Some of the strings were broken, Mr. Stogy said, and he did not use it much anyway. His wife, when she was alive, was quite a hand to play on it, but he was no pianist himself, and only "played chords," an accomplishment which I found was common among the mountain folks in such houses as had an organ in the sitting room. It consisted in fingering a tune by ear and striking keys which were in harmony with the air, though entirely independent of the printed notes.

During the winter Mr. Stogy was in considerable demand to furnish music at the dances. For his services he received three or four dollars each time. The participants in the dances were apt to be of the ruder sort, and there was some drinking and roistering, and the parties did not break up until the gray light of morning began to steal across the snowy uplands. Serious-minded church members kept aloof from this form of merrymaking; "but I can tell you," was one person's comment, "if they was to go they'd hurt the dances a good deal more than the dances would hurt them."

Nearly all the homes I saw in Norton were in many ways akin to Mr. Stogy's. There was very little care about appearances. Few of them were painted, and dilapidation was not by any means uncharacteristic of the majority. The surroundings were unsightly, and rubbish gathered where it would. Barns and sheds were rarely substantial. Usually they were loosely constructed, and had a tendency to totter into early ruin. Some of the houses had the stagings on the roofs that had been there ever since they were last shingled, years before. This looked shiftless, though I must confess the stagings might be convenient when the time came to shingle again.

The only new house I observed was one started a year or two previously that had come to a stop half done; but whether its owner desisted because he had exhausted his energy or his credit, I did not learn. The ground around was upheaved just as it had been left when the cellar was dug. The roof was on and the sheathing, but the building was not clapboarded, and no lathing or plastering had been done inside. Yet the family had moved in and had taken as a boarder the teacher of the "White" schoolhouse that is painted brown. A well-worn path led from the dwelling down to a stream in the hollow, a few rods distant, where there was a dipping-place, and thence was brought the household supply of water. At most homes spring-water flowed in pipes directly into the

Grandpa gives the Boys some Good Advice

house, or at least to a tub in the yard, though other instances were not lacking where families carried the water by hand from some natural source, very likely quite a walk distant.

The interior aspect of the Norton houses I thought better than the exterior, and the sitting room in particular usually had touches of attraction and of homely comfort. An odd feature of the older houses was a cat-hole puncturing the wall low down at one side of

the kitchen door. A shingle suspended on a single nail closed the hole to the weather, and swung back of itself into place after a cat had pushed it aside and crept through. One house I visited had a second cat-hole which gave access to the sitting room from the kitchen; but this was uncommon, and as a rule the cats only had free run of the latter apartment.

Here and there on the Norton hilltops could be found grass-grown mounds and excavations, accompanied perhaps by the wreck of an old stone chimney, showing where once had been a home; yet enough houses have been built to replace those that have gone. The town has not decreased in population, as have most rural towns in New England. It was settled late — barely a hundred years ago — and it has never passed the pioneer stage. It is still a backwoods town, and continues, as in the past, largely dependent on its forest industries. When the woodlands are exhausted, as it seems probable they will be soon, grazing and dairying may in some form be found profitable; but it is not unlikely that a considerable fraction of the inhabitants will seek some more favored section. In that event the forest will take to itself many of the now open fields and pastures, effacing, so far as it can, the memory of man with his devastating axe, and attempting to restore the uplands to their former sylvan solitude.

Another possibility is that Norton will fare as has the mountain town neighboring it to the south, where

the old inhabitants have to a great extent sold their places to foreigners from Milldale and gone away. The "Polacks," Jews, French, "Eyetalians," etc., who have moved in, attracted by the fact that they "can buy a farm for little or nothing," are not a very desirable class. They "live like pigs," and are often the worse for liquor; but they spend so little for their living expenses that they are, comparatively speaking, prosperous. Some of the run-down Yankees who remain are more disreputable than the foreigners — drinking, swearing, worthless decadents, strangely shiftless and irresponsible. I was told of one nondescript family of this class that had recently sold a sleigh. Before the buyer came for it they had a chance to sell again and did so. In each case they got their pay, and when man number two discovered the situation, he demanded his money within twenty-four hours, or he would have them arrested. That night the household packed up their goods and wended their way to another state.

One finds among the mountain dwellers not a few peculiar developments of individuality to which the seclusion of the thinly settled upland adds its own flavor. For instance, there was Dr. Podden. He lived in a little house he had built for himself off on a rough wood road, and he escaped taxes by refusing to pay them unless the town opened up a highway to his place. He was a forest hermit of whom the world saw little. Gathering gum was his chief employment, but

he made some sort of a salve which he sold among the neighbors, and this gave him the title of doctor. He

The Rain-water Barrel

was tall and dark, with a grizzly beard, and was reputed to be "part Injun."

Another man out of the common was Blind Cripton. He boarded in a family with whom he had been for many years, but he was not a dependant and made his living by peddling. He could go about the home town and several mountain towns adjoining, by himself, and he always knew when he came to a house. As he plodded along he tapped the ground before him with a long cane, and he had a curious habit of touching the knob of the cane to the end of his nose at frequent intervals, as if this, in some occult fashion, helped him to find his way. His hearing was remarkably acute, and it was never safe to whisper in his presence expecting he would not catch what was said. He could even tell to what family a child belonged by the sound of its voice.

His wares were small articles like thread, needles, pins, stockings, cough cures, candies, etc. He was a man of serious thought and liked to talk about medicine and history and religion ; but his views on the last topic were not very welcome in most homes, for he was an aggressive and extreme non-believer. In his wanderings Blind Cripton of course lodged and took his meals at the farm-houses. He had a keen antipathy to pork and would have naught to do with anything that contained what he called "squeal-grease," and though very partial to dandelion greens, yet if they had been cooked with pork he would not partake. In fact, he always carried along a supply of crackers in his

bag, and nibbled those if he was not suited with the food at the places where he stopped.

A more pleasing type than either of these two men was Mrs. Flanagan, one of the town's poor. She was not wholly dependent and she still lived in her own house — a tiny gray dwelling down a steep hill from the road, on the far side of a mowing field. As you saw it from the highway it seemed lost among the vast billowing hills of green forest that rose around. You noticed, too, that the little group of buildings looked strangely barren — almost as if they were deserted. Fifteen years ago Mrs. Flanagan's husband went out to an apple tree behind the house and hung himself. From that time on she and her daughter Martha carried on the farm. Then the daughter's health began to fail. A cancer was eating her life away, and toward the last she became a helpless invalid. Finally she died, and the mother struggled on alone, often in dire want, until the town officers, realizing that in her feeble age she was not fitted to support herself, took her and her farm in charge, and drove away her few cows. They would have put her in some family to board, but to such an arrangement she would not agree; and in a desultory way the officials care for her in the little gray house. They furnish her cord-wood and she saws it. When the supply fails, as has happened once or twice, she goes to the woods and hacks off dead branches and drags them home. The selectmen were

intending to shingle the dwelling presently, and the shingles were ready in the shed. Meanwhile the roof leaked badly, and in heavy rains the water came down as through a sieve. The lone inmate had even been compelled to get up on stormy nights and move her bed to escape the dripping from above.

She was a timid woman, and she suffered a good deal from fright during the long nights after Martha died. This fear has gradually subsided, but she always locks up early and rarely burns a light. Her only constant companions now are her three cats, and the favorite of these is a yellow cat that she thinks resembles a woodchuck, and so is not a little worried lest some one should make a mistake and shoot it.

The neighbors frequently visit her, for she is a gentle old soul and they are fond of her. They bring her good things to eat that her own cooking and lean larder will not be likely to supply, and they bring her flowers. She does not much care for the latter. Her mind is of too practical a turn to take much pleasure in what is merely pretty and in no way useful. It is a far greater satisfaction to get reading matter. She is especially interested in the local newspapers, and likes to read all there is in them except the murders.

Before I left Norton, I, too, visited Mrs. Flanagan and sat for a half-hour in her tiny kitchen. She apologized because it was "so dirty," though in reality it was very neat and clean. Yet it was not as it had been

when Martha was alive. Then they kept everything scoured "as white as snow." It was a curious apartment — no plastering, no wall-paper, but sides and ceiling all roughly sheathed with unpainted smoke-darkened boards. There was a small stove, a table, a few chairs, and on a shelf a great wooden clock. Mrs. Flanagan herself sat in a rocking-chair tucked back in a corner. She was frail and white-haired, and wore heavy-bowed, old-fashioned spectacles.

From where she sat the road up the hill was in plain sight. She never walked that far, but she rarely failed to see every one who passed or who turned into the lot on their way to make her a call. The approach to the house was very "sideling," and such of her visitors as come in a team usually tie the horse to the bushes on the borders of the road. She lives alone and probably she will die alone, and when the neighbors intending to call get within sight of the house they always watch to see if the smoke is rising from the chimney. Some of them would turn back if it were not, fearful that the little gray dwelling in the hollow had at last lost its tenant.

One phase of life on this New England mountain top was wholly new to me and unexpected — illicit distilling was carried on in Norton. Two or three families in different sections of the town were mentioned as engaged in the business, and it was said they smuggled off their liquor at night concealed in loads

of wood or hay to a town in the lowlands. I asked one of the town residents what he knew personally of this distilling, and he said: "Well, I've seen little streaks of smoke trickling up through the trees from Scates's woods, and I've been down through there and found coals and ashes and lead pipe. Old man Scates nearly died last year from drinking cider brandy he'd distilled through lead piping."

My informant was of the opinion that brandy was to some extent illicitly manufactured in all cider regions. If the country was not wooded and lonely enough to afford good hiding for the plant, the liquor was produced in a still set up in the house cellar; and the distillers responded to awkward inquiries by saying that they boiled the swill down there.

I was in Norton over Sunday. It was a doubtful, threatening day, a fit successor to a long spell of showery, befogged days preceding. Shortly after breakfast I heard some one at the kitchen door talking with my landlady. The conversation had begun with her remarking, "Well, Jim, what's the news this morning?" to which he had responded, "Nothing much worth lyin' about."

I looked out the window and saw a lank, long-haired youth standing at the threshold. He was evidently afflicted with a bad cold and my landlady made some sympathetic reference to the fact. "Yes, Mrs. Smithers," he said as he blew his nose violently, "and

it takes all my time to keep my ventilator open. I wish you would pray the Lord for good weather."

"Hmph!" responded Mrs. Smithers, "this weather ain't any o' the Lord's doin's. I'm goin' to get a ladder and go up in the sky and whack the devil in the head — then we'll have a change, I guess."

"Well, I must be trottin' along," said the man. "Most folks lay off on Sunday, but you know I'm away from home workin' all the week jus' now, and Sunday's the only chance I get to tend to my garden."

"And do you expect things'll grow that you start on Sunday?"

"Why, cert! Don't make no diff'rence about the day. You'd ought to see my ineyuns that I planted Sunday, two weeks ago — finest-lookin' ineyuns I ever set eyes on."

"But what does your wife say?"

"She don't say nothin', 'cause she knows it's necessary so't she and the children'll have somethin' to live on. I tell you gettin' married knocked a lot o' money out'n me. Before I was married I didn't have to work but half the time, and had money in my pocket, and could dress right up to the handle. Now I have to work all the time, and can't keep out o' debt — and jus' look at my clo'es!"

With that he shambled away, blowing his nose as he went.

Taking Care of the Baby

Later in the morning the warm sunshine glinted through the clouds, and I decided to attend church. The way thither was along a shadowed valley road delightful with damp, woodsy odors and the mellow rustle of a near-by stream hurrying over the stones that strewed its channel. I found Deacon Tanner standing on the meeting-house steps — a labor-worn, elderly man, who greeted me with hearty cordiality. He was the chief pillar of the church, and contributed one dollar weekly to its support.

I looked at my watch. Eleven o'clock — just service time. But the Deacon said, "There's no one here yet," and we chatted at the door for a half-hour before he suggested that we go inside. He told me the story of the church. It had been erected largely through his efforts. Thirty years ago the town was churchless. "I was always a Baptist," he said, "and there was one other Baptist family in the town at that time, and several Universalists, and, what was worse, a number of Spiritualists. When we began to think of having a church, we held Sabbath services in the town hall. That stirred up the Spiritualists, and sometimes they'd get into the town hall ahead of us, and they'd have a meeting and we wouldn't."

But it seemed that the Baptists had the most staying power, and in the end, with outside assistance, they put up a fifteen hundred dollar building, and started off with a goodly attendance and a very fair list of

members. "I suppose that you would be satisfied with just sprinkling," remarked the Deacon in conclusion, eying me in the hope he was mistaken, "but that wouldn't suit me at all."

The baptisms take place in a pool below a bridge a half-mile distant. Whenever any baptizing is to be done the banks in the vicinity are lined by a crowd largely made up of those outside the fold, to whom the ceremony presents a strange and entertaining spectacle. Some of the ungodly have been known to improve the occasion by going up stream and "kicking up a rile," but there is no serious disturbance.

The congregation at Norton church on the day I attended numbered eleven. We had all walked, and, judging from the weedy earth in the line of horse-sheds, few ever came in teams. A preacher was lacking. The last minister, by holding a service here in the morning and at a village three or four miles away in the afternoon, had earned seven dollars a week. All went well until he became too insistent in his efforts to heal the various antipathies that existed among the members of his flock. He took sides, and tried to bring about harmony by force. He even proclaimed that he would expel a certain member from the church unless he did as he ought; and a large congregation gathered for several Sundays to witness the threatened expulsion. But, instead, the minister left.

It was customary now for those who came to join in

a Christian Endeavor service and then in a Sunday-school. They formed a kind of family party as I saw them. There was the Deacon, his wife, a son, two daughters, one of them married and accompanied by

The Lonely Little Church

her husband and little girl, and a young man and his sister, also related to the Deacon, but not so closely as the others. The teacher of the "White" schoolhouse and I represented the outsiders.

The church interior was very simple — a low platform and desk pulpit, a cabinet organ, two rows of settees, a big stove, and, on the rear wall, a clock that punctuated the quiet with ponderous ticking. One or two patches of ceiling had fallen, and the plastering was everywhere cracked into an irregular mosaic and

looked as if a slight shock would bring it all rattling down. The Endeavor meeting was of the usual pattern, with singing for its most prominent feature; but there was no lack of remarks, Bible readings, and prayers, and every one took a part in these, with the exception of the outsiders and the Deacon's little granddaughter. The organ was played by the school-teacher, and all sang with fervor, though each quite independent of the rest as to time and harmony.

With the beginning of Sunday-school the Deacon went to the platform, and put some questions in connection with a gaudy-colored picture on a wall roll. "What is this, thar?" he would inquire, and point with his eye-glasses, reaching up on tiptoe, for the picture hung high. The wall roll illustrated each lesson for an interval of three months. They found it helpful, and voted to buy another for the next quarter, at an expense of seventy-five cents, after being assured by the treasurer that while not enough money was then in the treasury, there probably would be by the time they had to pay for the roll. For detailed consideration of the day's lesson we divided into two classes. The Deacon's son had charge of one, and the unmarried daughter of the other. The latter's charge consisted of the granddaughter, who preserved a discreet silence on most of the questions propounded, so that the teacher had to answer them herself. In the larger class we went faithfully through the mechanics of

the lesson as printed in the lesson quarterlies, and then, duty done, the Sunday-school united in a closing song. Now that the religious exercises of the day were concluded, the congregation left the meeting-house, and loitered homeward, conversing on wholly secular subjects, as if the church services had not been.

I had found it all very interesting, and could not but respect those who had built the little church, and were keeping it alive. With the Deacon, to be sure, his particular form of religion was his hobby and chief pleasure, but at the same time there was something fine in his persistent labor and sacrifice for it; and, lacking his support, it seems quite probable that this Green Mountain top would again become churchless.

A Home-made Lumber Wagon

IX

DOWN IN MAINE

A Mount Desert Well

I HAVE always thought that fiction made the people of the New England country much more picturesque and entertaining than they really were, for it has seemed to me that in New England, as elsewhere, the commonplace abounded and distinct originality only cropped out at infrequent intervals. Since going "down" in Maine I have revised this opinion somewhat, and am willing to concede more than I would have before to our dialect writers — at least to such as are not carried away with a craze for queer types and mere grotesqueness.

The rural population along the Maine coast is composed almost wholly of Yankees of the purest strain,

than whom there does not exist a more piquant combination of shrewdness and originality, intermixed with not a little downright oddity and crankiness. They are born jokers, and their conversation is enlivened with many curious twists and turns and out-of-the-way notions. The talk of the men and boys, it must be allowed, is apt to be well seasoned with brimstone, yet this insinuates itself in such a gentle, casual way that it is robbed of half its significance. On ordinary occasions the inclination is to avoid absolute swearing, and make the word "darn" in its various conjugations serve to give the desired emphasis. "Darn" was one of the hardest-worked words I heard, though a close second was found in the mention of his Satanic Majesty.

Another characteristic of the Maine folk was their great fondness for whittling. Some of them would pare away with their jack-knives at sticks big enough for firewood, and at one sitting whittle them all to pieces. Yet this jack-knife labor was strangely aimless. These down-east Yankees only whittled out their thoughts — rarely anything else — not even a toothpick, though I did see one man, on the porch of a store, fashion a prod about a foot long with which he proceeded to clean out his ears.

Still another characteristic of the inhabitants was their serene lack of haste. "Forced-to-go never gits far," was a sentiment that seemed to have found universal acceptance in the rustic fishing village where I sojourned.

The people were all loiterers on the slightest excuse. You saw them visiting in the fields, they sat on fences together and in the grass by the roadside, and on the counters and among the boxes of the little stores, and on the piazzas in front of the taverns and post-offices. Teams that met on the road often drew up to give the drivers opportunity to talk, or a man driving would meet a man walking, and both would stop, while the latter adjusted one foot comfortably on a wheel-hub and entered into conversation.

Yet the people were not incompetent or thriftless. In their plodding way they nearly all made a decent living, and some accumulated modest wealth. The homes were, almost without exception, plain two-story buildings of wood with clapboarded sides. The low, old-fashioned, weatherworn houses, shingled all over, walls as well as roofs, were getting rare. Barns were small, for it is not a good farming region, and the houses presented a somewhat forlorn and barren aspect from lack of the great elms, maples, and spreading apple trees which in other parts of New England are an almost certain accompaniment of country homes. These trees do not flourish in northeastern Maine. Instead, spruce and fir are the typical trees of the landscape. Their dark forests overspread a very large part of the country and give to it a look of rude northern sterility, bespeaking short summers and long, cold winters.

A Lobster-pot

To me the region was most attractive close along the shore. I liked to linger on the odorous wharves, with their barnacled piles and their litter of boards and barrels, ropes and lobster-pots. I liked still better to follow the water-line out to the points where were seaward-jutting ledges against which the waves were ceaselessly crashing and foaming. Behind the points the sea reached inland in many a broad bay and quiet cove, and with every receding tide these invading waters shrunk and left exposed wide acres of mud-flats where barefoot boys grubbed with short-handled forks for clams. Then there were the frequent ruins of old vessels, some of them with hulls nearly complete, but dismantled of everything that could be ripped off and

taken away; others with little left save their gaunt, black ribs sticking up out of the sand like the bones of ancient leviathans of the deep.

"'Twa'n't storms that spiled 'em — leastways that wa'n't the trouble with most on 'em," explained a man I had questioned about them. "They just wa'n't seaworthy no longer, you know."

The man was fastening a new sail to the bowsprit of his clumsy fishing sloop that lay on its side on the beach. "But you see that vessel, right over thar in the middle o' the cove — that's a wrack. It drove in here in a storm with nobody on board. That was a East Injiaman wunst. There ain't many vessels of any size owned along the coast here now. This boat's the sort we have mostly hereabouts these days. I go lobsterin' in it. I got one hundred and twenty pots out, and I'll be startin' to visit 'em about three o'clock to-morrer mornin'. It'll be noon by the time I c'n make the rounds and git back."

I left the man tinkering his boat and went up from the shore into a pasture field. There I found two children, a boy and a girl, picking wild strawberries. The berries were small, but they were sweet and had a delicate herby flavor never attained by cultivated varieties. The boy said they intended to sell what they picked to the hotels. The hotels were good customers all through the season, and the children tramped over many miles of field and swamp and woods in a search

for the succession of berries — from the strawberries, which ripened in June, and the raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries and huckleberries which followed later, to cranberries in the early autumn.

Now a man called to the little girl from a neighboring patch of cultivated land where he was hoeing. "Susy,"

A Home on the Shore

he said, "I want you to go home 'n' get my terbacker. It's right in my other pants't I hung up by the suller door."

"Do you want your knife, too?" the girl called back.

"No, jest the terbacker. I can't work good 'ithout it."

"Your beans are looking well," said I, from over the fence.

"Yes; but the darned weeds grow so I have to hoe 'em," he complained, with the air of thinking the weeds increased in number and size out of pure contrariness.

"You're a stranger round here, ain't ye?" he continued, inquiringly.

I acknowledged that I was.

"Well, d'ye ever see that stun over't Green Harbor?"

No; I had not.

"Well, ye ought to. It's a grave-stun — marble — 'n' 't was jes' like any other stun when 'twas planted. Man named Ruckle is buried thar. I c'n remember him when I was a boy. He was a great hand for religion — use to be alus tellin' how now he bore the cross, but sometime he'd wear the crown.

"An' people use to say to him he mustn't be too sure. Might be he'd go to hell after all. But, no, he knowed he was goin' to heaven, 'n' if there was any way o' informin' his friends he was wearin' the crown after he died he'd let 'em know. Well, he died 'n' they buried him 'n' put up the stun, 'n' 'bout three months after'ards people begun to notice there was somethin' comin' out on't. It was special plain after rains, 'n' then they made out 'twas a figger of a man with his hands folded, prayin'; and there was a crown on his head. It'd pay you to go over thar 'n' see that

Summer Calm

thar stun. You arsk for Job Ruckle. He's a relative 'n' he'll tell you all about it."

My curiosity was aroused, and a few days later I went over to Green Harbor and looked up Mr. Job Ruckle. He was standing in his kitchen doorway.

"It isn't going to storm, is it?" I remarked.

Mr. Ruckle cast his eyes skyward. "Well, I do' know," was his response, "we been havin' awful funny weather here lately. Now to-day you can't tell *what* it's goin' to do. There's spells when the sun almost shines, and then it comes on dark and foggy 'n' you hear the big bell dingin' down at the lighthouse."

His friendly communicativeness, like that of most of the natives, was delightful. I mentioned the mystical gravestone and he said: "I'll take ye right to the buryin'-groun' 'n' show it to ye. But I got to draw a bucket o' water fust. My woman'd give me Hail Columby if I didn't."

He picked up a heavy wooden pail, and I followed him across the yard to an antiquated well-sweep. He lowered and filled the pail.

"The well ain't so very deep, but you won't find no better water nowhar," he declared.

I begged to try it and commended its sweetness and coolness.

"Yes, the rusticators all take to that water," was his pleased comment.

By rusticators he meant the summer boarders of the

region. That was the common term for them on the Maine coast. At first my unfamiliar ears failed to catch the signification of the word, and I had the fancy that a rusticator was some curious sea creature akin to an alligator.

"These 'ere rusticators," the man went on, "stop here time 'n' agin to git a drink from my well. That's ginoowine water, that is!"

Presently he was leading the way down one of the narrow, woodsy lanes that abound in the district to the rustic burial-place of the community.

"Thar's the stun," said Mr. Ruckle, "'n' thar's the figger coverin' the hull back on't. Here's the head 'n' the two eyes, 'n' out this side is the hands clasped, 'n' thar's the crown. Looks like an old Injun, I tell 'em. There's lots o' people come here to see it — some on 'em way from Philadelphia, 'n' I've seen this lane all full o' rusticators' buckboards. Some think the figger's a rael sign from heaven; but my idee is that the marble's poor, or thar wouldn't no stain a come out that way. I tell the relations 't I'd take the stun down 'n' put up a good one, but the rest on 'em won't have it teched."

The story of the stone was interesting and the cloudy markings on its back curious, and I could make out the vague figure crowned and prayerful, yet it certainly was too grewsomely like an "old Injun" to be suggestive of a heavenly origin.

One thing that impressed me during my stay in Maine was the astonishing number of little churches among the scattered homes. I could not see the need for half of them. The only excuse offered for their superabundance was the uncompromising denominationalism of the inhabitants. One man told me of a little hamlet where two churches had recently been begun — a Methodist and a Baptist.

"They're at Clamville, way up 't the end o' Hog Bay," he explained, with the customary attention to details. "'Tain't nothin' of a place — only 'bout six houses there and the people are poorer'n Job's turkey; but somethin' stirred 'em up lately, and they set to work to put up them two churches. Well, their money's given out now, and they've stopped on both of 'em. I wouldn't wonder a mite if they stood there jes's they air, half finished, till they rotted and tumbled to pieces."

It was a man named Smith who related this. He was driving and had overtaken me walking on the road, and as he was alone he had offered me the vacant seat in his buggy. That is a way the Maine folks have, for a team not already filled never passes a pedestrian, whether acquaintance or stranger, without this friendly tender of assistance.

"You look like a feller I knew once that was to our Smith reunion, over in Washington County a few years ago," the man confided. "But he was rather

taller'n you, come to think. I was livin' over there then and I got up the reunion myself. We had a great time. There was Smiths from all around — Massachusetts and everywhere — forty or fifty of 'em; and there was a friend of mine there, an artist from Aroostook County with his camera. He took two pictures of the crowd, and he had bad luck with both of 'em. I looked through his machine and it was the prettiest sight ever I see — all of us settin' there on the grass with the woods behind. By George, I wouldn't 'a' had them pictures fail for twenty-five dollars!

"You're stoppin' over here at Sou' East Cove, I s'pose. You at one o' the hotels?"

"Yes, at Bundy's."

"Well, that's a good place — best there is there. I'll set you right down at the door. Bundy's wife's a good cook, and they ain't too highfalutin on prices. Only trouble is Bundy gets full."

"What, in Maine?"

"Oh, yes, no trouble about that. You c'n always get your liquor in packages from the cities, and there's always drinkin' resorts in every town that has drinkers enough to support 'em. In Bar Harbor and such places they run the saloons perfectly open, but mostly they are a little private about 'em. You have to go downstairs and along a passage or something of that sort. It's understood that about once a year the

drinkin' places'll be raided, and every rumseller pays a fine of one hundred and fifty dollars. System amounts to low license to my thinkin', and I don't see but there's full as many drunkards in Maine as you'll find anywhere else among the same sort of people.

"I'll tell you of a case. I live back here a mile or so beyond where I picked you up, and down a side road near the shore there's a man and wife lives, and the man gets tight about once in so often. He's uglier'n sin when he's spreein' — beats his wife 'n' all that sort o' thing. Well, up she come the other night through the woods carryin' a little hairy dog in her arms. Her man had been and got crazy drunk and took to throwin' things at her, and her face was cut and bleeding. She was highstericky bad, and talkin' wild like, and huggin' that little dog o' hern and tellin' it to kiss her — only comfort she had in the world, she said. I was for gettin' the man arrested, but she wouldn't hear of it.

"Hohum, wal, wal, it ain't easy to know what to do about this drinkin' business, and our Maine system don't work to perfection no more'n any other. Guess it's goin' to rain."

It did rain that evening — came down in floods with an accompaniment of lightning and thunder. After supper I sat on the piazza with the rest of the hotel family. Among the others gathered there was

a young woman from one of the neighbor's, and a travelling agent who said he had made fifteen hundred dollars in nine weeks, and a piano-tuner from a seaport a score of miles distant, who said he had made thirty-four dollars in the last three days. "But I ain't collected a red cent of it," he added, "and how in the old Harry 'm I goin' to pay my hotel bill with things goin' on that way I'd like to know!"

Slap! The piano-tuner despatched a mosquito.

"Dick," said he, addressing the landlord, "where'd all these mosquitoes come from down around here?"

"Well," responded the landlord, soberly, "we bought quite a few last year. Had 'em barrelled up and sent on from Boston."

"Dick, d' you know," said the travelling agent, "I like to 'a' got killed when I come off the steamer on to your wharf this trip?"

"No; how's that?"

"My gosh, I had the greatest highst 't I ever had in my life! Stepped on a banana peel or something, and my feet went out on the horizontal so almighty quick I forgot to flop. I couldn't 'a' sat down any harder if I'd 'a' weighed five ton!"

Then the others related various "highsts" they had experienced, after which the piano-tuner changed the subject by remarking: "Too bad you didn't git your hay in, Dick. I'd 'a' helped you if you'd spoken to me about it."

The hay alluded to was a bedraggled little heap in front of the hotel steps that had been mowed off a a patch about two yards square.

"Yes, that grass is wetter'n blazes, now. I cut it with my scythe this mornin', and I been calculatin' to put it on my wheelbarrer 'n' run it into the barn, but I didn't git round to it. This's quite a shower and it's rainin' hot water — that's what it's doin'! But it'll be all right to-morrer. These evenin' thunder-storms never last overnight. You take it when they come in the mornin', though, and you'll have it kind o' drizzly all day."

"Dick," said the tuner, "what's the matter you don't git the rusticators here the way they do at Codport? This is a prettier place twice over."

"The trouble," replied Dick, "is with the Green Harbor end o' the town. We got all the natural attractions this end, and there ain't no chance o' the rusticators quarterin' over there't Green Harbor, and the Green Harborers know it. So the whole caboodle of 'em turns out town meetin' days and votes down every blame projec' we git up for improvin' o' the place. Only thing we ever got through was these 'ere slatted-board walks laid along the sides o' the roads, but they're gittin' rotted out in a good many spots now. What we want is asphalt."

"But the rusticators like scenery," commented the piano-tuner. "Perhaps your scenery'd draw 'em if

you only fixed it up a little. I've heard tell that they whitewash their mountains in some places so 't they look snow-capped. Why don't you whitewash your mountains up back here? You'd have all the people in Boston comin' up to look at 'em."

An Old Schoolroom

Mr. Bundy ignored the suggestion of whitewash. His mind still dwelt on the wrongs of his end of the town. "We can't even git a new schoolhouse," he declared. "Same old shebang here we had when I was a boy, and same old box desks. They're most whittled to pieces now, and the roof leaks like furiation. You'd find the floor all in a sozzle if you was to go in there to-night."

The Post-office Piazza

"That's your district school, ain't it?" questioned the travelling agent. "But you got a good high school?"

"Yes, the buildin"s good enough, but the school only keeps here one term. Then it goes down t' the Point a term and then over t' Green Harbor a term."

"What do the children do; foller it around?"

"No; it's four miles between places, and that's too fur."

"Nearly all the boys in town seem to have bicycles," I said. "I should think they might go on those."

"That's so, there is a considerable number of bicycles owned round here," acknowledged Mr. Bundy. "D' you ever notice though, 't a boy c'n go almost any distance on his bicycle for pleasure, but as f'r usin' it f'r accomplishin' anythin', he might's well not have any?"

"Well, I've got to go home," interrupted the young woman from the neighbor's.

"What's your rush?" a young fellow sitting next her inquired. "Thought I was keepin' company with you. We no need to be stirrin' before midnight — 'tain't perlite."

"Midnight! what you talkin' about?" scoffed the landlord. "When I used to go to see my girl we set up till half-past six in the mornin' — set up till breakfast was ready."

"Well, I can't wait no longer," reiterated the girl.

"Hold on," said the young fellow. "I'll borry a lantern and go along with you."

"'Tain't far, I don't want ye to," was the response.

"You git over across the street there alone and the thunder'll strike you!" the piano-tuner remarked.

But she had gone, and he turned to the young fellow: "Well, I'm blessed if you didn't make a muddle of it. Course she wouldn't go home with you. Who'd go home with a lantern!"

For a time the company lapsed into silence and meditated. Then some one spoke of a schooner which had come into the bay and anchored the day before, and went on to say that it had eight or ten young fellows on board from New York. "They're sailin' the boat themselves except for a cap'n and a darky cook, and they're givin' shows along the coast. They give one over t' the Point last night."

"What was it like?" inquired Mr. Bundy.

"Well, 'twas kind of a mixture, but minstrels much as anything."

"There's a good deal goin' on around here just now," commented the landlord. "To-morrer night there's a dance over 't Green Harbor, and night after that there's a dance here."

"Isn't it pretty hot weather for dancing?" I asked.

"Yes, I'll warrant there'll be some sweatin'; but we don't mind that. We dance in spells all the year, though we ain't had any dances lately, since winter."

"How much is the admission?"

"Ladies are free. The men pays fifty cents each, or fifteen cents if they come in to look on and not to dance. But you wait till next week. We're goin' to have a regular town show then. You've seen the posters, I s'pose. There's one in the office, and they're all around the town — on fences and trees and barn doors, and I do' know what not. The fellers 't put 'em up said they plastered one on to the back of every girl they met. Course that's talk, but I know they pasted some on to Bill Esty's meat cart."

"Yes," said the piano-tuner, "and they got one on to Cap'n Totwick's private kerridge, too."

"Private darnation!" responded Mr. Bundy. "The only private kerridge Cap'n Totwick's got 's that ramshackle old wagon he peddles fish in."

"I met the cap'n when I come Monday," the piano-tuner went on. "I was standin' out in front o' the post-office readin' a letter when he drove up from his house just startin' out on a trip, and he stopped and told me he'd forgot to take his horse's tail out o' the britchin' when he was harnessin', and if I'd switch it out for him 't would save him gittin' out. I see the bill pasted on his wagon then, and to pay for my horse-tail job I made him wait while I read it through."

"Say, you wouldn't think it to look at him," said the landlord, "but Cap'n Totwick's got a good lot o' money salted down."

"He dresses like an old scarecrow," responded the piano-tuner, "and five dollars'd be a big price for that hoss he drives."

"Well," said Mr. Bundy, "I was at the post-office one day and the cap'n come in just as I was sayin' I wanted to git a sixty dollar check cashed, and he reached down into his old overhalls for his pocket-book, and cashed the check — yes, sir!"

Thus the talk rambled on from one topic to another through the long evening. I can only suggest in what I have related its racy interest and the graphic glimpses it afforded of the life and thought of the region; and when I think it over I am glad I avoided the famous resorts and big hotels in my trip and took up lodgings in that humble hostelry at Sou' East Cove.

A Moonlit Evening

X

ALONG THE JUNIATA

The Home Porch

FIFTY years ago that idyllic little song, "The Blue Juniata," was known by every one. It is very simple, and yet the sentiment of the words and the gay, easily caught harmony of the music pleased the public fancy, and it was not only universally sung, but parents named their children after the heroine, and boat-owners adopted the name for their boats. The song is not now as widely and ardently beloved as formerly, though it still charms, and it is to be

found in the popular collections. The first verse is —

"Wild roved an Indian girl,
Bright Alfarata,
Where sweep the waters
Of the blue Juniata.
Swift as an antelope
Thro' the forest going,
Loose were her jetty locks
In wavy tresses flowing."

What always impressed me most in this and the other three verses of the song was the river. Its beauty, I thought, must be superlative — the *blue* Juniata and the *sweep* of the waters — how delightful! The rhythm of the river's name, too, made a strong appeal to my imagination, and it was these things more than anything else that impelled me to visit the stream toward the close of a recent summer. I did not get acquainted with its upper course, but kept to the hilly country through which it flows for many miles before it empties into the Susquehanna. On either side are frequent wooded ridges extending away at right angles, with pleasant farming vales between. Numerous little towns are scattered along the banks, each with a covered wooden bridge reaching across the stream. The river is too small and shallow to be used for traffic, and it is never enlivened by anything larger than rowboats. It has hardly the rollicking character suggested

by the song which has made it famous, and yet its only serious fault, as I saw it, was its color.

"No, it ain't blue just now," said a farmer, on whose piazza I had taken refuge to escape a shower, "but it is usually. This year, though, we've been having rains constant, and the river's been muddy all summer. There ain't been a single time when we could go gigging."

"Gigging! What is that?" I asked.

"Ain't you ever gigged?"

I confessed that I had not.

"Well, gigging is going out in a boat at night with a lantern and a spear after fish. Sometimes we get fish that long" — placing his hands about two feet apart — "carp, you know."

From where we were sitting we looked across a grassy yard enclosed by a picket fence. The fence was designed primarily to keep out the hens and other farm animals, but it came very handy as a hanging-place for pails and crocks and various household odds and ends. The crocks were especially conspicuous. Indeed they were to be found on nearly all the farmyard fences throughout the region; for the people were accustomed to put their milk in crocks instead of in pans. On this particular fence there was quite a line of these crocks — squat, heavy earthen jars that would each hold about four quarts. In color they were light brown, excepting one of a

deep brick tint, which the man said had been his grandmother's, and was, he supposed, more than a hundred years old.

"This house is old, too," he added — "anyways the end toward the road is. It is an old Indian house,

The Dooryard Fence

and that end is built of logs. There used to be loop-holes in it to shoot from, but the logs and everything has been boarded over and hid from sight this long time, inside and out. It seems as if Indians must have been plenty here once. We're always ploughing up their arrow-tips and tomahawks."

The shower was nearly past, and the man stepped out into the yard and picked several clusters of grapes from a vine that trailed up a tall pear tree. "These're

right nice, now," he remarked, as he handed me some.

"Which do you get most of — pears or grapes — from that tree?" I inquired.

"Well, since the vine's growed over the whole tree we often won't get more'n half a bushel o' the pears, but you c'n see we'll get a good lot o' grapes this year."

When the last lingering drops of the rain had fallen I returned to the muddy road. A mile's tramping along its sticky trail brought me to a railway station, and I sat down to rest on a platform truck. Every few minutes a freight train would go thundering past. The valley is a great railroad thoroughfare; for the stream has graded a pathway through the hills directly toward the coal and iron regions of the western part of the state. The trains were very long, and often contained from sixty to eighty cars. How the engines did pant and sway from side to side as they shouldered along, dragging their mighty burdens!

"I suppose the weight of that there train is almost beyond computation," said a sunburned, middle-aged man, who had sat down on the truck near me just as a train of monstrous coal cars, all loaded to the brim, clattered past.

This remark led to a conversation, and the man told me he had a farm a few miles back from the river. It was a little farm — only fifteen acres — and I judged

he did not depend entirely on it for a living. At any rate he mentioned that the previous spring when the floods had washed away nearly all the bridges in his town he had taken the time to help for several weeks rebuilding them. But his farm had suffered as a consequence. "I bought a sprayer for my trees," he said, "and I only got a chance to use it on one side of one apple tree, and that tree is just loaded on the side I sprayed and you kin hardly find another apple on the place."

Speaking of the farms in the district as a whole, he said that while some ran up to two and three hundred acres or even larger, a hundred acres was considered a fair-sized farm and there were more under that figure than over. The tendency is for the farms to divide into smaller ones. The majority of them are mortgaged, and the farmers are just about able to meet their interest charges and other expenses and hold their own. "Yes, it takes some scratching to pay a mortgage," my companion declared. "You wunst get one and it hangs on and hangs on and you're likely to be left in the brush in the end."

It was his opinion that the local farmers had not shared the prosperity of the country in recent years; and yet some of their troubles were of their own making. There was the way they went into life insurance, for instance. I did not clearly understand the relation of cause and effect in parts of what he had to say on

After the Day's Work

this subject. Life insurance was evidently a great bugbear to him. He looked on it as the wildest kind of speculation and may have got something of a different nature mixed with his narrative.

"We have had people that was well fixed, and life insurance has made 'em poor," he affirmed. "There was one man I know that went into it right strong, and he kep' makin' until he had twenty-five thousand dollars, and he was tellin' a neighbor man about it; and this neighbor, he was a good old Christian man, and he said, 'Now stop, you've got a good house and buildings and a good farm and you've got all that money. You're the richest man in these parts. Now stop where you are.'

"But the man said he was goin' to go in again and double his twenty-five thousand and then he'd stop. So he insured some more and lost all he had, and last week his farm was sold at auction for thirty-seven hundred dollars.

"The insurance agents are always goin' about among us tryin' to get us to insure, and I'll tell you jus' how mean and low and devilish they are; and I'm a man of truth, mister, and you can depen' on what I say. They try to make you insure your relatives that are gettin' old. Now, I call that devilish. I intend to live right, I'm a member of the church and of the Sunday-school, and I'm a delegate to-day on my way to a church meetin'. Well, they been after me

to insure my parents; but I don't want to harbor the thought that I could make money by their dying. There was one feller bothered me special. My father was gettin' feeble and he was a consumptive man, and this agent was forever urgin' me to insure my old father for ten thousand dollars.

"I didn't like to be dragged into a thing I knew the devil was in, but he kep' at me, till one day he come when I had the toothache and neuralgia. I thought my eyes was goin' to bust out of my head; and I said, 'I don't want to see you no more. If you come here again — unless you've got the law to protect you in your business — I'll kill you or cripple you for life. I'd do it now, but you've jus' hit me on the wrong day. I got the toothache and the neuralgia so I ain't fit to do nothing.'

"That's what I tol' him, and he never dared show himself there again.

"Some folks gets their insurance money by fraud. I know a man that made out a certificate declarin' a certain person had died that hadn't. He is a man that pretends he is a minister and signs 'Rev.' to his name, but he is so ignorant he don't know enough hardly to direct his poor little children aright.

"The Good Book says, 'What a man sows that he'll reap,' and it's true. Most of 'em that insure has a pretty hard time. The payments have to be made and that takes all that them who are insured kin earn,

and a good many times it eats up all their property. Men that was well-to-do have got shaky and are about halfway on each side o' the fence. You can't tell when they'll have to drop everythin'.

"There's a case like that right next to me. My neighbor, he got his mother-in-law insured. He was a poor man, but he didn't think she'd live long, and he paid on and paid on until he about broke his neck. I was talkin' with him only lately, and he was askin' me what he better do.

"I tol' him, 'Unless you stick to it you'll lose all you've put in.'

"That didn't make him feel any better, and he swore and called his mother-in-law a bad name, and said every one died but the right one. Now, ain't that devilish?"

I had to acknowledge that the spectacle of this man anxiously awaiting the demise of his mother-in-law was not at all admirable, even supposing her character furnished mitigating circumstances. What further information I might have gathered on the subject of insurance I do not know, for my friend's train came in just then and we parted company.

During my wanderings along the Juniata I went up several of the side valleys, and found them uniformly fertile and attractive. I wondered if my acquaintance at the railroad station was not mistaken about the prevalence of mortgages, but I was assured by others

that he was not. Certainly the broad, smooth fields, and the numerous herds grazing on the aftermath in the home lots, and the substantial houses and great barns were suggestive of comfort and plenty. The dwellings were in most cases wooden; but brick and stone were not infrequent. The home vicinity had always a pastoral, domestic air. You were sure to see cats aplenty, and a loitering dog or two; hens and chickens were everywhere, and it was not unlikely the farm poultry would include ducks and turkeys;

Typical Outbuildings

pigeons fluttered about the roofs of the whitewashed outbuildings, a bevy of calves would be feeding in a near field, and you could hear the pigs grunting in the hog-sheds.

Wheat was the leading crop of the region, and most barnyards at that season contained a towering stack of

straw, somewhat undermined by the gnawings of the cattle. Indian corn was another heavy crop. The grain raised was nearly all ground locally, and every town had its grist-mill, usually a big stone structure in a vernal hollow, with a placid mill-pond just above.

A Grist-mill

These mills were delightfully rustic, and they had a pleasing air of age and repose. I liked, too, their floury odor. There was something very sweet and primal about it, as of a genuine fruit of the earth — not simply a tickler of the palate, but an essential sustainer of human life. I approached one of the mills and asked a young fellow who was smoking his pipe in the doorway if they allowed visitors.

"Depen's on what sort o' 'umor the captain's in," said he, and turned and spoke to some one in the mill.

The "'umor of the captain," or proprietor, proved to be agreeable, and I spent half an hour looking about the dusty, cobwebby old building, with its big wheels and hoppers, and heaps of grain, and bags of flour and meal.

I returned to the road presently and resumed my walk, and a quarter of a mile farther on came to a cider-mill that had just begun its autumn work. It was a shaky little skeleton of a structure on the banks of the creek, with a blacksmith's shanty adjoining; and the mill and shop together drew a crowd. A bellows wheezed and a hammer clanked from the dusky recesses of the shop; a horse was being shod, and its mate, still hitched to the heavy farm-wagon, stood half asleep outside. A small engine puffed and rattled within the mill, and a farmer at one side was shovelling a load of apples into the hopper. Other loads were waiting their turn, each with an empty barrel or two on top. A group of children lingered about looking on and eating apples which they selected from the wagons, and a number of men were sitting or standing here and there, visiting and chaffing and occasionally stepping up into the mill to take a drink of cider from a tin cup that hung handy.

Most of the cider the farmers were then making was to be boiled down for use in preparing a winter's supply of cider apple-sauce, or apple-butter, as it was called. Apparently no family could do without this

culinary luxury, and I saw the process of manufacture going on in many a back yard. It was important that the cider should be boiled while it was perfectly sweet; and as soon as possible after it had been brought home, a great copper kettle was set up in some convenient spot, filled with cider, and a fire built underneath. The

Making Apple-butter

rule was to boil the cider three-fourths away; and if the boiling was started early in the morning, it would be completed by noon. The scene presented was quite gypsylike, with the crackling flames, and the spluttering, bubbling pot, and the smoke and vapors, and the sunbonneted women hovering about.

When the cider had been properly reduced, the pared and sliced apples were added, and flavored — perhaps with cinnamon, or perhaps with allspice and cloves. The boiling of the apple-sauce would very probably continue into the evening. All through the afternoon the women took turns in keeping the contents of the pot stirring, for which purpose they used a wooden paddle with a very long handle inserted at a right angle. It was a relief to every one concerned, when the apple-butter had thickened and was pronounced done. Now it only needed to be taken up with a dipper and put into casks or earthen crocks and it was ready to be set away. Some households were content with fifteen or twenty gallons, but others thought they could not get along with less than a "bar'l" full.

Skirting the north bank of the Juniata was the ditch of an old canal. In the bottom was more or less stagnant water, but for the most part the hollow was overgrown with grass and weeds. Conspicuous among the latter were the sturdy, wide-branching jimson weeds, set full of round, spiny pods that were beginning to crack open and scatter their seeds. One day I came across a man hacking at these jimsons with his scythe. The sun was low in the west, and he was about to desist. "There's a heap to cut yit," he said. "I ought to 'a' started the job earlier."

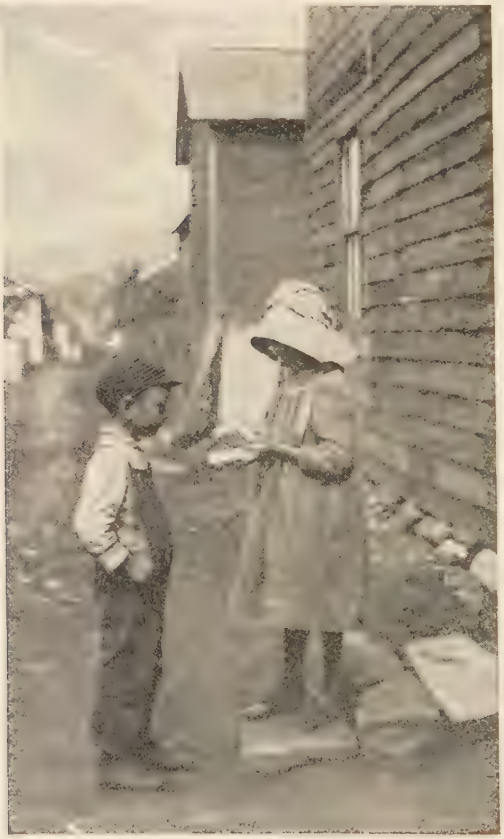
I was less interested at the moment in jimsons than

in finding lodging for the night, and I asked the man where such shelter was to be had. He replied that I might perhaps stay with him — but he would have to see his wife first. Then, after mentioning that his name was Werner, he led the way up a stony lane to a tidy farm-house on a knoll well above the river. We went into a shed kitchen at the rear of the dwelling, where we found the farmer's wife and daughter busy drying peaches in the stove oven. They agreed that I could stay, and I sat down by the fire. The room swarmed with flies and midges, but otherwise was not unattractive.

Mrs. Werner from time to time stepped to an outbuilding for wood. The supply was nearly exhausted, and some of the sticks she brought in were pretty poor specimens. "Upon my word, I don't know what we shall do if we don't get more wood soon," she remarked to her daughter. "My, oh my, that there cherry we're burnin' now is awful!"

They had no woodland on the farm, and hitherto had depended on line trees, orchard trees that had passed their usefulness, and other waste about the place. But these resources had of late been practically exhausted, and Mr. Werner was planning soon to row up the river in partnership with a neighbor and collect a lot of old railway ties that had been dumped down the bank. They would fasten them together with wire into a raft and tow them down.

I had not been long in the house before it began to get dark, and the daughter lit a lamp. Through the open door I could hear the cattle lowing in the fields, some calves were running uneasily back and forth in the orchard anxious to be fed, and the hens and chickens were crowding together on a pile of rails just outside the picket fence that surrounded the yard, peeping comfortably when things were settling to their wishes and uttering sharp notes of alarm and protest when matters were otherwise.



Childhood Treasures

At length a boy of sixteen or seventeen appeared, went to the pump on the borders of the barn-yard, and labored at the handle until he had water enough in the accompanying trough for the two mules and span of horses that were kept on the place. Then he called the dog and went after the cows. By the time he returned, his mother had set the potatoes and beef frying for supper. She now left her daughter to finish while she took a pail and went to the barn to help milk. All the farmers' wives in the region milked. Usually the work was shared with the men, but on some farms it fell to the women altogether. The girls learned to milk as a matter of course and were said to enjoy it. The care of the garden was another task with which the women had much to do. The men ploughed or spaded the plot in the spring, but the planting, hoeing, and gathering of produce was relegated to the wives. None of the field work was done by the women ordinarily, and yet they were very apt to help during haying and harvesting, in seasons when hired men were scarce.

The milk of the Werner farm went to a creamery. It was collected daily and the skim milk returned. Just then the price paid was one and one-half cents a quart, and it rarely went above two cents. As soon as Mrs. Werner finished milking and had washed her hands at a bench outside the door, she resumed supper preparations, and we presently gathered at the table.

The clock struck eight while Mr. Werner was asking the blessing. "It's later'n it is usually at this time," said he, "but we been extra driven with work to-day.

Farm Market Wagons

Help yourself," he added, making a little gesture toward the food. "We ain't much for waitin' on folks."

After supper the women cleared the table, washed the dishes and the milk-pails, and attended to the drying peaches. The boy went off to another room to study his algebra lesson for the next day at school. Mr. Werner and I sat and talked. "We have to work pretty hard," he said, "and we'd ought to keep a hired man, but we can't afford it. I've had bad luck this year. I lost a good young horse in the spring, and then come July I lost most half of my young cattle. The cattle was with other young stock from the neigh-

bors out on a mountain pasture. We paid the owner of the land for the grazing privilege, and he was to look after the cattle; but he was careless and a good many of 'em got into a ravine between two ridges and couldn't find their way out. There wa'n't no feed, and they e't laurel. That poisoned 'em and they died. I ain't had no such bad luck since the flood."

"The flood! When was that?" I inquired.

"In 1889," was the reply. "The Juniata ain't naturally a deep stream. You could wade it almost anywhere, though you might get your shirt collar wet in some places. But when we had the big flood, you couldn't 'a' touched bottom with a fifty-foot pole. It rained for three days about the first of June, and the last night o' the rain it come down in slathers. We could hear it leakin' in the garret, and my wife, she kind o' thought we better get up and see to things. I wish we had. When we looked out in the mornin' the river was way out o' the banks, and the water was beginnin' to come into the lower side o' the yard. It was risin' fast, and we stepped aroun' lively. We got some o' the furniture upstairs, and I turned the stock out toward the higher land. Come nine o'clock we couldn't stay no longer, and I had to lay boards from the piazza for the women to walk on, and when I left, last of all, I had to wade up to my waist.

"My cows was all saved, but my hogs didn't have no more sense'n to swim back to the pen, and they

was all drownded but one. The chickens was bound to stay too. They got onto the manure heap in the barn-yard and sailed away with it. All my sheds and most o' the fences floated off. The barn stood on a little higher groun' than the rest o' the buildings, but it was undermined and was left in such bad shape I had to build a new one. The only thing that kep' my house from goin' was one o' those big old chimneys built right in the middle of it. Why, in that flood, if we was settin' where we are now, we'd be way under water. It come within three inches o' the ceilin'. Everything on this floor was about ruined.

"The river was full of all sorts of things, and the bridges was all swep' away and the crops spoiled, and it was terrible. It was that flood that did up our canal. There was a canal-boat tied right about opposite our house when the storm begun, and as the water riz they kep' shiftin' the boat until they got it away out back of the house in the orchard where they hitched it to the trees. The river was only out of its banks two or three days, but the walls o' the canal was broken in lots o' places and other damage done to it, and the company just left it as it was. Yes, that was a right smart of a flood."

At the conclusion of this narration Mr. Werner conducted me to my room. All was oblivion after I retired until about four in the morning, when I heard the farmer calling to his son from the foot of the

stairs in slow cadence, "Fred, Fred, Fred! do you hear me?"

"Uh-h-h!" grunted Fred, sleepily.

"Come awn!"

A pause and no response.

"Fred, Fred, Fred! do you hear me?"

"Uh-h-h!"

"Come awn! Don't pull the covers over you!"

Silence and a repetition of the above dialogue with slight variations continued for fully five minutes. Then the father went out to the barn and I dropped off to sleep. So did Fred, no doubt, for a half-hour later the parental voice resumed its appeal from the foot of the stairs.

"Fred, Fred, Fred! do you hear me?"

"Uh-h-h!"

"Come awn!" etc., as before.

At length the father a second time went out, but stopped in the yard and added a few supplementary calls. Still Fred slumbered, and presently in came his father from the barn again. He was ominously silent, and he did not stay below. I heard him ascend the stairs with wrathful footfalls, enter Fred's room, and haul the young man out of bed by main force. I wondered whether he did this every day.

By breakfast time at half-past six all the barn work was done, and the brimming pails of milk were standing at the kitchen door waiting to be strained. Fred

came in a little late. He had been to the river with his gun, hoping to shoot a duck.

"No, I didn't get nawthing," he said in response to a question of his sister's, as he carried a basin of water from the back-room pump to the bench outside. Then he spit vigorously, washed his hands and face, and spit again. Expectoration was the Alpha and Omega of everything he did.

"No, I didn't get nawthing," he repeated when he sat down at the table, "but I see a loon. I didn't meddle with him, though."

"Why not?" I inquired.

"Well, I had some experience with one last year. He was swimmin' in the river, and the boys all got out their guns and he had some fun with us. He'd dodge quicker'n lightnin'. By the time our shot got to him, he'd be out of sight and the ripples circlin' away from where he'd dove. I had a rifle, and I thought that would fetch him, sure, but I fired more'n twenty times and never hit him only once, and all I did then was to snip off a few feathers."

Mr. Werner did not quite approve of Fred's hunting. "We use to have great flocks of ducks fly up and down this river," he said. "There'd be twenty or thirty or more in a flock. Now, we think it's a big flock if we see half a dozen, and we don't have wood-duck any more, but only fish-ducks that ain't good to eat, and a little duck they call the butter-duck. It

One of the Street Pumps

don't make no difference, though. Every one's boun' to shoot, and they fire away more lead at the ducks, tryin' to hit 'em, than those they get are worth — a good deal."

Across the river from the Werners' was a village where I spent some time after I left the farm-house. Like the other hamlets I saw in the valley, this village had a look distinctly Teutonic and foreign. Its narrow streets, its stubby, cut-back trees, its paved walks and gutters, and general stiffness were reminiscent of Holland, yet it lacked Dutch cleanliness, and was tinged with an unthrifty decay and dilapidation. Among the wooden houses crowding close along the walks were many small stores and shops which earned their proprietors a meagre living by serving the tributary farming region. The farm buggies and buckboards, carryalls, market and lumber wagons came and went, but were never numerous enough to greatly enliven the place or to very much disturb its tranquil repose. Hitching-places, invariably in the form of wooden posts with iron rods connecting the tops, were provided in front of or near by all the public buildings and larger stores.

The walks were sometimes of boards, but oftener were of brick or rough, irregular slabs of flagging. At intervals on them were great wooden pumps that each served a number of neighboring families. But perhaps the most interesting feature of the town, and

one calculated to help immensely the village gossip and sociability, was the porch that projected from nearly

On a Village Sidewalk

every house front, and which rarely failed to have a seat flanking the door on either side. These seats

were permanent, each a short settee with room for two persons. They looked very domestic, and were suggestive of much chatting of a placid sort, and of the calmness and phlegmatic ease that seemed to characterize the people not only of the hamlet but of the entire district. This staidness of demeanor on the part of the inhabitants and the gentle aspect presented by nature were not at all what I had anticipated. Indeed, I found little either in the local life or in the appearance of the river and the country bordering to recall the wild romantic flavor of that favorite song of a half-century ago, "The Blue Juniata."

The Juniata

XI

DWELLERS AMONG THE CATSKILLS

Old-fashioned Churning

SEPTEMBER had arrived, and the Catskill farmers were cutting their corn, digging their potatoes, and getting in their late millet. As for the summer people, they had nearly all returned to the cities, and the heights and valleys had taken on a touch of loneliness, and the hotels and vacation cottages looked dismally empty. The chill of autumn was in the air, but there had been no frosts of any severity. The fields were still noisy with the drone of insects, and the chestnut burs were as yet prickly green balls with no

hint of cracking, though the nuts within were mature enough to be toothsome to the ever hungry small boy. That the youngsters had begun to knock off the burs from the lower branches, and pound them open with stones, was plainly evidenced by the broken twigs and other litter under the roadside trees.

My first long walk in the Catskills was up a half-wild glen that wound back among the mountains from one of the larger valleys for a distance of five or six miles. Snyder Hollow, as this glen was called, was hemmed narrowly in by wooded ridges, and sometimes the trees crept down and took full possession of all save the tiny ribbon of the highway. But more commonly the road was bordered by diminutive meadow-levels and strips of cultivated hillside, and there would be an occasional small dwelling. Most of the houses were of weather-worn gray and had never been painted. Others, either as a result of a streak of prosperity with which fortune had favored their owners, or in response to the influence of summer boarders, had been furbished up and enlarged. But however commendable their furbishing in augmenting the general tidiness and comfort of the homes, those that were unimproved had a picturesque charm their more favored neighbors could not rival. One such that attracted my attention particularly on my way up the glen was a little red house perched on a slope high above the road. In the depths of the ravine below was a hurrying trout stream, and this

chanced to be spanned just there by a bridge. I concluded to sit down on the bridge to rest and see more

Digging Potatoes in a Weedy Field

of the little house up the hill. Across its front extended a rude piazza with a board roof. The piazza

served as a shelter for the family tubs, and on the floor near the tubs some tomatoes were spread to ripen. A woman in a calico sunbonnet was the only person I saw about the place. She came out from the kitchen door and descended a steep path to the barn, near the stream. Shortly afterward, as she was returning with a pail in either hand, a buckboard driven by a young man came along the road and stopped.

"Hello, Jane!" the occupant of the buckboard called out to the woman with the pails.

"Hello, Bill!" she responded.

"How are you?" he continued.

"First rate; how's yourself?"

"Oh, jus' so, so."

"Ain't your sprained ankle gettin' along?"

"It's better, but it's purty weak yit. Any word from Johnny?"

"Yes, we had a letter day 'fore yisterday, and he'll be here by noon to-day, if I ain't mistaken."

"Well, you tell him I'm comin' round to see him." And the man drove on, while the woman toiled up the hill with her two pails and entered the kitchen.

Halfway between the house and the barn was a tall butternut tree with a grindstone, a sawhorse, and a meagre woodpile under it. The woman presently paid a visit to the woodpile and carried off an armful of sticks for her fire.

Next she came forth with a basket, retraced her steps to the tree, and picked up a peck or so of the butternuts. These she spread to dry on a thin slab of stone laid over the top of a barrel. Meanwhile the hens had gathered around her, hopeful of a feed, and she shooed them away with her apron.

Beside the stoop at the back door was set a water-pail into which an iron pipe discharged a copious jet of spring water. The sight of this water direct from the unsullied hills with its suggestion of coolness and purity made me thirsty, and I at length decided to ask for a drink. By the time I had climbed the hill to the house, the woman had returned to the kitchen, and I found her starting to make butter in a great upright wooden churn. She had a poor opinion of butter made in a churn turned by a crank, and declared she couldn't abide the taste of it. The only right way to get the best butter was to paddle the cream up and down in one of these old-fashioned barrel contrivances.

In response to my request for water she got a tumbler from the cupboard and accompanied me outside to fill it. While I drank she took up her broom and swept off the threshold, and then stood gazing down the valley. The outlook over the woodland glen, with its flanking of green ridges and the silvery stream twinkling into view here and there, was very beautiful, and I fancied she was admiring the scenery. But when I ventured the opinion that she must enjoy having

a home in such a situation, she said that she was so used to the scenery round about that she never thought whether it was pretty or not, and she would much rather live in a village. She was watching the road for her son. He had been working in Massachusetts, but he was coming home to stay now. "It's a terrible place for malaria, Massachusetts is," she informed me, "and he couldn't stand it there."

A Home on the Mountain Side

I went on presently and continued as far as "Larkin's," the last house, at the extreme end of the valley. The rhythmic beat of flails sounded from Larkin's barn and enticed me to make a call. The farmer, a grizzled, elderly man, and his son were threshing buckwheat on

the barn floor. They dealt with about a dozen of the brown bundles at a time, standing them on end in regular order three feet or so apart, and giving the tops of each in turn a few judicious raps with the flails that set the dark kernels flying in all directions. As soon as a bundle that the threshers were belaboring toppled over, the blows became more energetic, and it was well cudgelled from end to end. To do the job thoroughly the bundles were turned and rethreshed once or twice, and then the straw was pitched out into the barn-yard to rot for fertilizer. Every Catskill farmer has his buckwheat fields, and these he plans shall yield enough to make sure of a year's supply of buckwheat cakes and some additional grain for spring cattle feed.

Larkin's cows were feeding in the home lot, and from time to time he looked forth from the barn door to see what they were about. They showed an inclination to visit the orchard, and when he discovered them getting too near the trees he sent his dog to drive them back. "We ain't keepin' only four cows now," he said. "We did have twelve or fifteen, but my wife 'n' me are gittin' old, and it was more'n she ought to do takin' care of the milk 'n' makin' the butter from so many, 'n' I told her we'd go into sheep. You c'n see part o' my flock up there on the side o' the mountain. I always intend to have a bell on one o' my sheep, but I don't hear nawthin' of it to-day, 'n' I guess it's got lost off. A bell's quite a help in finding your sheep,

The Buckwheat Thresher — Fair Weather or Foul?

and, besides, it keeps 'em together. They don't never stray away very far from the bell sheep, 'n' if you don't have no bell, they git scattered and can't find each other."

Larkin's farming was rather crude and so was that of all the Snyder Hollowites. I wanted to see something that smacked less of the wilderness, and after I finished my wanderings in the glen I took a train and went west into the dairy country on the farther Catskill borders. The sun had set, and it was growing dark when I alighted at a little valley town and looked about me at the big hills mounding on every side.

"Where are the best farms here?" I asked a young fellow loitering on the station platform.

"Wal," he responded, "the best farms around here are up at Shacksville."

"How large a place is Shacksville, and how do I get there?" I questioned.

"It ain't no place at all," was the reply. "It's just farms. It's 'bout three miles thar by the road; but you c'n cut off a good deal by goin' cross-lots."

"How about lodging?"

"No trouble about that. Jase Bascom'll keep you. Do you see that signal light right up the track thar? A lane goes up the hill whar that light is, and it ain't more'n a mile 'n' a half to Jase's by it."

"Could I find my way?" I inquired doubtfully.

"Oh, yes! They drawed wood down thar last winter, 'n' they put chains on their sled runners for brakes, 'n' that tore up things consid'rable, so't the track's plain enough. It takes you straight up to the

hill road, and then you turn to the left, and Jase's is the fust house. You'll know the house when you git to it by its settin' up on kind of a terrace, and havin' two barns across the road."

Thus directed, I walked up the track to the signal light, crawled through a pair of bars, and found a rutted, unfenced trail leading up a great pasture hillside. At first it was easily followed, for much of the earth that had been torn up by the chain brakes had washed away from the steep incline and left a waste of stones. I toiled on for a half-hour, and reached the top of the rise. The darkness had been increasing, and when at this point the ruts and stones merged into unbroken turf, I could not descry whither the track led. A faint new moon shining in the hazy sky helped some in revealing the lay of the land, but everything was strange to me, and my bearings were a good deal in doubt. Presently I came to a patch of woodland, which, so far as I could discover, was perfectly pathless. I did not care to stumble about at random in its dense shadows, and I kept along its borders until it was passed.

Now I began crossing open, stone-walled fields. The walls were a nuisance. Their sturdy barriers networked the whole upland, and I was constantly brought to a standstill by them and had to put my toes into their niches and scramble over. After a while I climbed into a broad cow lane. Surely, that would

take me to some habitation, and I stepped along briskly. Yes, at the end of the lane I came to a group of farm buildings — a barn looming against the sky close at hand, and a house and sheds among the trees just down the hill. But no light shone from the house windows, and the weedy barn-yard showed that the place was deserted.

I searched about in the gloom and found another lane that apparently afforded egress, and I followed it over the gray hills for a mile. Then it joined a highway, and my spirits rose. Not far distant was a house on a terrace, and two barns stood opposite, across the road. It must be Jase Bascom's, I thought. A dog began barking warningly and came down into the roadway and confronted me; but a sniff or two seemed to reassure him, and he ceased his clamor. I went up the terrace steps, rapped at the door, and when it was opened asked for Mr. Bascom.

He had gone to bed, I was informed; but that did not prevent my arranging to stay for a few days. No one else had retired, and the rest of the family were sitting about the kitchen, except for the hired man, who was snoozing on the lounge. Supper had been eaten an hour or two previously, and the dishes had been washed and replaced on the long table. But now Mrs. Bascom and her two daughters hastened to remove the blue fly-netting that covered the table, and clear a space for me. They granted my request for a bowl of bread

A Morning Wash at the Back Door

and milk, and added cookies and cake, and a square of delicious honey in the honeycomb. I had rye bread, as well as wheat, and enjoyed its moist, nutty sweetness. This pleased Mother Bascom, who said, "Jason and me always uses rye, but the young folks think they can't eat nothin' but wheat."

By the young folks she meant the three grown-up children who remained on the farm — Sarah, Ollie, and Eb.

The kitchen was neatly papered, and the rough, warped floor was still bright with its annual spring coating of yellow paint. All around the walls were frequent nails, from which hung towels, hats, coats, etc. A big wooden clock stood on a shelf near the cellar stairway, and on a longer shelf back of the stove were a row of lamps, a match-box, and a stout hand-bell used to call the men to their meals. Behind the stove on the floor was a wood-box, close beside which, hanging on a nail, was a home-made bootjack. This was the especial property of Mr. Bascom, who continued to wear stout leather boots in winter and in wet weather. But what impressed me most in the furnishings of the room was its five cushioned rocking-chairs — just enough to go around the family and leave the lounge for the hired man. The father's chair was in a warm corner next the stove, and on the window-casing near at hand hung his favorite musical instrument — a jews'-harp.

The evening was cool, and presently Ollie went to the wood-box to replenish the fire. "Don't put in but one stick," directed her mother. "You know we got those apples drying in that there back oven, and if you make it too hot, they'll cook instead o' dryin'."

"We had ought to have a new stove," declared Ollie. "The top o' this one is all warped and cracked with the fires we make in the winter."

The stovepipe ran up through the ceiling, and I learned later that all the pipes in the house were arranged likewise. The house was built fifty years ago, and in those days when stoves had recently superseded fireplaces it was thought quite sufficient to have the chimneys begin either in the garret or near the ceiling in the chambers. If it was the latter alternative, a narrow cupboard was usually constructed beneath.

"Can you keep a fire in the kitchen stove over night?" I inquired.

"No," replied Mrs. Bascom, "but we can in the settin'-room stove. We got a big sheet-iron stove in there, and all we have to do is to put in chunks and shut the dampers tight."

"I must git me a half pound o' powder next time I'm down to the village," remarked Eb after a pause. "I might want to go huntin' some lowery day."

"What do you hunt?" I asked.

"Oh, mostly squirrels and pa'tridges just now. A

little later we'll be on the lookout for foxes. We got a good hound to trail 'em, and last winter we shot seven. Their skins was worth a dollar 'n' a half to two dollars. Coons is good game, too. We git as many as eighteen or twenty some years, and then ag'in not more'n three or four. They fetch about a dollar. I s'pose we make more money out o' skunks as a rule than anything else. One year me 'n' another feller got seventy-eight. Part of 'em we trapped, but the most we got by diggin'. Every thaw in the winter they'd come out, and we'd track 'em to their holes. The snow was deep, and not much frost in the ground, and it wa'n't as hard diggin' as you might think. There was one hole we found twelve in. You know they don't make their own holes, but use those the woodchucks have dug. Sometimes we'd find woodchucks in the same hole with the skunks. They wouldn't live right alongside o' the skunks, though, but in a branch passage. Skunk skins fetched from thirty-five cents to a dollar 'n' a quarter that year, 'n' we averaged sixty or seventy cents, I'll warrant ye.

"Wal," said Eb, with a yawn at the conclusion of these particulars, "I guess it's bedtime. We don't stay up very late here, for father's callin' us to git up about the middle o' the night."

By the time I was out the next morning Mrs. Bascom and Ollie were coming in from milking.

Their outer skirts were tucked up, and they wore big aprons and sunbonnets. These two never failed to help the men milk, but the other daughter stayed indoors getting the breakfast. Practically all the women in the region milked, though the young girls were beginning to question its being one of their duties. For instance, at the next house up the road was a maiden who had "learnt to play on the pianner, and she won't go near the barn any more."

The Bascoms had about four hundred acres, one-third of it cultivated, and the rest pasturage and woodland. They kept a sleek herd of Jerseys, numbering not far from fifty, and sold the milk to a creamery. The women before they returned to the house had assisted in unloosing the cows from their stanchions, and then Mr. Bascom, staff in hand, conducted the herd to "pastur'." He did all the driving by shouting. The cows strung along the road for a long distance, but they understood the farmer's voice, and he had no trouble in making them turn in at the proper barway.

When he came back, he and Eb and the hired man gathered at a long wooden trough of flowing water just outside the back door and washed their hands and faces.

"We don't keep it as tidy as we might out back thar," said Mr. Bascom, apologetically, to me as the family were sitting down at the breakfast table; "but

On the Way to the Barn to help Milk

we ain't got time to tend to things the way they do round city houses."

"Aunt Jessie ought to be here," remarked Sarah, and they all laughed.

"She's a town woman, Aunt Jessie is," explained Mrs. Bascom, "and she's bound to have everythin' just so. Well, she was stayin' here last summer, and one day she took the butcher knife and went out and cut all the weeds growin' round the back door. Then she come in complainin' how dretfully her back ached. But nobody didn't ask her to cut the weeds. She might 'a' let 'em alone. They wa'n't hurtin' nothin'."

After we had eaten breakfast Eb hitched a pair of horses into the market wagon and drove down to the village creamery three miles distant with the great cans of milk. This was a daily task of his the year through. Mr. Bascom before going out to work sat down in his rocking-chair and smoked a pipe of tobacco. "Eb's got to git his off horse shod," said he, "and he won't be home afore noon, I bet four cents." Apparently the others concurred in his opinion, for no one accepted this wager.

Meanwhile, the hired man had shouldered a great, long-toothed reaper known as a "cradle," and gone off to cut a late field of buckwheat, and the women were hustling around doing the housework. Ollie got ready some mince-meat, Sarah started to make potato yeast with the intention that evening of

"sponging up some bread over night," and there was other baking and stewing going forward. Most of the summer housework was done in a rear ell of the dwelling, that until a few years ago was chiefly used as a dairy. In a corner of the main room had stood the big barrel churn, and the floor was deeply worn where the churn had been canted on edge, and rolled into position, and out again. From a shed adjoining, a wooden arm was still thrust through the wall ready to be attached to the paddle handle, and in the shed were wheels and cogs, and a revolving, slanting platform, on which two dogs used to be tied to walk up the incline until the churning was finished. Excepting Sunday, the cream was churned every day in the week. The butter was packed away in tubs that were stored on the cool floor of a cellarlike apartment running back into the bank at the far end of the dairy.

Neighboring the ell were a number of rude little shanties — a hog-pen, corn-house, hen-house, and smoke-house. The last was only four or five feet square, and seemed to be a storage-place for rubbish as I saw it, but it was cleared out whenever ham, bacon, or beef was to be smoked. Against one side of it, two flour barrels were set up on slabs of stone. They had been freshly filled with ashes, and Mother Bascom was preparing to make soft soap. Near by was an enormous iron kettle half full of water with a fire burning under it.

"Most folks leech their ashes the day aforehand,"

Making Soft Soap

Mrs. Bascom informed me, "and that's what you have to do if you use cold water, but I heat the water and let it run through the ash barrels in the forenoon. Right after dinner I put my grease and scraps into the kittle and pour in the lye, and by three o'clock I've got a barrel or more of soap made and am ready to go into the house. I leave the soap in the kittle till the next day. It bursts the barrel if it's put in afore it's cool. We store it down cellar. 'Twould be some handier to keep it upstairs, but 'twould freeze sometimes in winter and dry up in summer."

"This kettle looks like a very old one," I suggested.

"We've had it ever sin' I c'n remember," responded Mrs. Bascom. "It's an old residenter. We use it mostly to boil swill in, but it comes handy in a good many ways. Years ago we boiled down sap in it; but smoke and ashes and everything would get into the sap while 'twas boilin' and the sugar would be black as the kittle. It tasted all right, though."

"Isn't it rather early in the fall to make soap?" said I.

"Yes, it is, and I've got plenty left from my spring makin'; but I was afraid it might be cold weather by the next new moon."

"Does the moon affect it?" I asked.

"Oh, yes; if you make it in the old of the moon, you've got to boil and boil. Seems as though you'd

never git through. They say the best time to make is the full moon in May, but I ain't particular about the month myself."

Another thing which Mrs. Bascom declared must be done with proper regard for the moon was hog-killing. "Kill a hog in the old of the moon, and it all goes to grease," she said. "The meat fries up and there ain't much left. I've heard sayings, too, about planting in the new of the moon, but the only thing we're careful about puttin' in then is cucumbers."

From all that I heard in the Catskills I was impressed that old sayings were still accepted there among the farm folk with childlike faith. Another manifestation of their power in Mother Bascom's case had to do with a thrifty specimen of that odd plant known as hens-and-chickens, which she had growing in a pail beside the front door. She said she picked off the buds as fast as they formed, because if they were to blossom and go to seed there would be a death in the family.

The prevalence of rustic superstition was again emphasized when the hired man mentioned that the beech trees were unusually well loaded with nuts and quoted "they say" as an authority for this being prophetic of a hard winter.

"Do you think that is so?" I questioned.

"Wal, I believe thar is a little into it," he replied.

We were on the borders of the buckwheat field, and he was just preparing to return to the house for

dinner. Below us in the hollow was an old farm-house and a number of ruinous sheds. I asked about their owner.

"Jim Gamp lives thar," said my companion, "but he rents the place from Andrew Fuller. Andrew Fuller is the big gun of this town and has got farms and mortgages all around. He's rather of an old hog, though, and when he gits a chance to skin a man he does it. Jim's been wantin' him to fix up the buildings, but the old whelp won't do a thing. Jim's had to patch the barn roof with boards, but it leaks in spite of him. The barn's too small, anyway. There ain't room in it for his crops, and he has to stack a good share of his hay outdoors. I expect, though, he's kind o' shiftless, or he'd git along better. Do you see those oats just beyond the house? He got 'em into bundles and left 'em in the field. I'll bet ye they've stood there two months. They ain't good for much now — oats or straw, either."

I spoke of the numerous lines of stone wall that crisscrossed Jim Gamp's land, and the hired man said that he had calculated there were miles of walls on every fair-sized farm in the neighborhood, and if the labor of building these walls was estimated at a reasonable rate it would often exceed what the entire farms would sell for to-day.

"I notice you have a good deal of hawkweed in this buckwheat," I said as we started homeward.

"Yes, it's gettin' in everywhar through the fields and pastur's. Its leaves spread out flat and cover the ground, so 't where it grows the grass is all killed out. It's the worst darn stuff you ever see in haying. There's a little fuzz or something about it that's enough to make you cough yourself to death."

Binding Indian Corn

We had left the buckwheat field now and passed through a gap in the fence and were on the highway. "Doesn't the snow drift on these roads?" I asked.

"It would if the farmers didn't cut the brush along the sides. They're obliged to do that by law, and usually they cut it in the summer after haying, and it lies then till spring, when they burn it;

but we hain't given this road along here no attention so far this year."

It was not much travelled, and occasional strips of grass grew between the wheel tracks, while on either hand the briers, weeds, and bushes ran riot — raspberries and blackberries, milkweeds hung full of pods, jungles of tansy, elecampane, life-everlasting, Jacob's-ladder, fireweed, etc. In a ravine where we crossed a brook, were several clumps of skunk-cabbage which the hired man said had spread from Bill Hastings's meadow, up above.

"Thar never none growed around here," he continued, "until Bill fetched some of it or had it sent from his relatives in New Jersey. He set it out thar by the rear of his house and he uses the root for a medicine he takes. He offered to fix me some when I was feelin' a little off the hooks a while ago, and I told him if it was a question between dyin' an' skunk-cabbage I was ready to take the stuff; but bein' as I wa'n't that bad off yet I wouldn't trouble him. Bill's the greatest feller for swallerin' medicines ever I knowed — makes 'em himself out of weeds and things. He was stewin' up some leaves o' this here elecampane t'other day when I was to his house. Goin' to try it for his liver, I believe. It must be pretty bitter, for I never saw nawthin' would eat elecampane leaves till the grasshoppers was so blame thick this summer. They trimmed it up some. They e't tansy, too — e't it bare to the

stalks. We're always havin' some pest nowadays. Have you noticed how many dead trees there are scattered through the woods? They'll give ye an idee o' what the forest worms done here last year. They stripped the woods so't there wa'n't hardly a leaf left."

Just then the hired man stopped and pointed to a slender sapling growing out of the roadside wall. It was loaded with tiny scarlet fruit. "I'm goin' to have a few o' them thar pin-cherries," said he, and he pushed through an intervening clump of sumachs and pulled off a handful. "That's robbin' the pa'tridges o' their winter provender," he remarked as he shared his spoils with me, "but I guess they'll stan' it." And we plodded on, nibbling at the sour little globules until we reached the house.

Such walks as this along the upland roadways were a constant pleasure during my stay at the Bascoms'. There was only one thing I enjoyed better, and that was to sit in the lee of a stone wall in lazy contemplation of the landscape. We were having genuine autumn weather — chill air and a blustering wind, sailing clouds and bursts of sunshine. Tinges of red and gold were beginning to appear in the trees, and nearly everything in the plant world had gone to seed. Yet the fields were still alive with strident insects, the flies and bees buzzed cheerfully, and in the quiet of my loitering places I was sure to be visited by certain investigating ants and spiders. The country I over-

looked was one to fall in love with — great rounded hills, their summits wooded, and their slopes and the valleys laid off endlessly in green fields and pastures. How beautiful it all was, and how grateful the shelter of those brown, lichened walls!

Considering

XII

A CANAL-BOAT VOYAGE ON THE HUDSON

Trading with a Bumboat

EVER since I have known the Hudson as a real live river and not simply as a crooked streak on the map, I have had the wish to gain a closer acquaintance with the life on the canal-boats, whose long, lazy tows are one of the stream's notable features. Each evening, in the warm-weather months, a tow of these deep-laden craft just out from the Erie Canal leaves Albany for New York.

They always make the trip back and forth in the wake of a steam vessel. One might fancy they would

journey southward drifting with the current, but the river is too slow even for canal-boats, its progress seaward being barely eight miles a day. As you watch the tows from the shores you see people on the boats, you see little cabins at the sterns with stovepipes sticking out of the roofs, and you see many lines of washing flying. The tows, indeed, are floating villages, and there is a touch of romance about them that stirs the onlooker's gypsy blood at once.

With me, at any rate, the impulse to make a voyage on a tow was very strong. Here was the chance to see a novel phase of life, and that amid the famous scenery of the Hudson. If the canal-boat folk would take me, I would make one trip down the river, at least.

It was late in the afternoon, and I was in Albany wandering along the wharves. The day was dull, and, to a stranger, the high, rusty warehouses and breweries flanking the river were depressing. A number of canal-boats were moored along shore, some low and snug, some loaded high with an unwieldy bulk of lumber or hay. There was not much going on aboard them. Two or three men were doing odd jobs about the decks, and a woman in a pink waist was standing at a cabin door and looking out on the river. The only attention I got was from a lad dozing on a cabin roof, who, at sight of my valise, roused up and asked what I was peddling. Things were equally quiet on the

wharves. A few boys and men were loitering about, but there was no stir, no activity, not even in the vicinity of the frequent corner saloons.

I was half wishing to give up the trip, when three canal-boats arrived from up the river, and the tug in charge pushed them in to the wharf near where I stood. I spoke to a man who jumped on shore with a rope, and he pointed out one of the rough, sunburned working-men on the boats and said that was the "captain" — he was the man who owned the three boats, and if I wanted to go to New York he was the one to talk with.

The captain, who in dress and looks was no different from his fellows, proved friendly, and was perfectly willing I should go down the Hudson on his vessels. I offered to pay my fare, but he said "No" emphatically, and added: "I don't want any money. It's no trouble. Most of my crew left when we got to the end of the canal, and there's room enough. But you'll have to take things as they are. I can't answer for what your bed'll be. Like enough it isn't fit for you, and then again it may be all right. It's just as the men left it, and they're sometimes pretty dirty fellows."

But I could go. That was a relief, for the uncertainty of ways and means when one is starting out on such an expedition always keeps one's spirits at a low ebb. I did not worry much over possible hardships.

"I don't know how you'll manage about your

The Call to Dinner

meals," the captain continued. "Usually I have my wife and children along, but this time I've got a housekeeper. My wife took sick last month and she stayed at home this trip; so I had to get Mrs. Libbey to cook and tend to the other work, and I don't know how she'll feel about taking a boarder. Perhaps she'll think she has enough to do now. You'll have to fix that with her. The best way is to speak to her yourself when you find her out on deck. If she don't want the job, why, you can get all you want to eat to-morrow from the bumboats."

With this the captain turned to his work. I did not want to run the risk of going hungry till to-morrow and leave the chance of getting something then to the "bumboats," whatever those might be. So I went on shore and visited a meagre little grocery not far away, where I bought a supply of cookies and a can of salmon. With these I thought I could hold body and soul together the entire trip if necessary.

The weather was threatening, and evening came early. Lanterns were lit on the boats, and lights twinkled out one by one all about the river and along the shores. Presently a horn blew, and the captain and the two men, Duncan and Hugh, who made up the river crew, strolled down into Mrs. Libbey's cabin on the best boat to have supper. I was on the point of going after my can of salmon and bag of cookies when the captain reappeared and invited me to

come in and eat with the others. He said he had fixed things with Mrs. Libbey, and I could pay her for my board whatever I saw fit when we reached New York.

This made me one of the family, and I followed the captain's lead and crooked myself down into the cabin. The ceiling barely missed one's head, the walls were honeycombed with cupboards and drawers, and there was a folding bed in one corner and a cook-stove in another. The floor was covered with oil-cloth, and the whole place was neat and orderly. The table filled the middle of the room. Most of the chairs were nothing but backless camp-stools that could be closed up and tucked away when not in use. The table was not so large but that everything on it could be reached without much stretching, and I was invited to draw up and help myself. We had beans, meat, potato, bread and butter, crackers, and tea; and the fare right through the voyage was plain and coarse, but not unwholesome. The canal-boat people were inclined to neglect their forks as conveyances for food, and each reached his own knife to the butter-plate from time to time. However, these customs are not peculiar to canal-boats. We four men left little spare room at the table, and Mrs. Libbey sat back near the stove and chatted, and saw that our cups were kept filled with tea.

By the time I returned to the deck preparations were being made to start. Dusky figures were moving

about on the boats and on the wharves, conspicuous among them a short, slouch-hatted man who, with much swearing and violence of manner, was making up the tow. There were many lights on the river — yellow, red, and green. Tugs were moving hither and yon, whistling and puffing, and in the hazy air of the half-clouded evening the scene seemed full of mystery and strange noises.

At eight a great steamer just starting for New York left its pier a quarter of a mile above, and its mountain of lights drifted down past us. Except for the tall smoke-stacks towering above the pile, its size and its wealth of glow and glitter made it seem, as seen from the humble canal-boats, a veritable "floating palace." On an upper deck was a search-light peering about with its one eye, flashing its bit of vivid illumination now on this side the river, now on the other, bringing out the color and form of all it touched with astonishing clearness amid the surrounding night. As soon as the steamer reached the open river its engines began to pant, and it soon vanished on its swift course southward.

Shortly afterward the shore-lines of our tow of canal-boats were cast loose, and we too were on our way down the river. But ours was not the easy flight of the brilliant passenger-boat that preceded us. Our long, clumsy tow was being dragged through the gray evening gloom by a single stout steamer, and the blunt,

deep-laden canal-boats ploughed their way through the dun waters very heavily. In our rear the sparkle of the city lights slowly faded, and the glows in home windows on the wooded shores grew fewer and farther between.

Our tow included between thirty and forty boats, made up in tiers of four abreast. The boats in each tier were snug together, and though they sometimes swung apart a foot or two, there was never much difficulty in stepping from one to the other. The captain I had adopted owned three of the boats in our tier, and the odd one was in charge of an elderly Frenchman, his wife, two dogs, and a cat.

Responsibility was now past for the night, and it was not long before everybody turned in. I had a bunk in a little cabin at the rear of the middle one of our three boats. This cabin was a kind of store-room — a catch-all for every sort of rubbish. Here were pieces of harness, cast-off clothing, rags, tools, bolts, kerosene cans, a tub of paint, etc. It had various odors, and these were not improved when Duncan, my fellow-roomer, lit a stout tin lamp and turned it low to burn all night. The apartment was mostly below decks, and as for ventilation, one could about as well have slept in a dry-goods box with the cover on.

My bunk looked short, but there proved to be a recess in the farther wall where I could stow away my feet. It was a bed without linen, and the coarse

blankets and bed-ticking pillow looked so uninviting that I concluded to sleep on top in the clothes I had on. A calico curtain was strung on a wire along the front of the bunk. This I drew, and, with the dim light of the lamp shining through it, and with the swash of the water around the stern of the boat sounding in my ears, I went to sleep. On the whole, things were very quiet, and, though the boat rolled a little and now and then softly bumped against its neighbor, the motion was so slight and we slipped along so smoothly that it was hardly different from being on land.

When I clambered out on deck a little before six the next day, the weather was still dubious, and during the morning we had frequent scuds of rain. Toward noon a thunder-storm came rumbling down on us from the Catskills, but soon the sky showed signs of clearing, and the head wind which had been tossing the waves into whitecaps grew quieter.

Right after breakfast Mrs. Libbey had taken everything out of her cabin that could be taken out, set up her wash-tub, and gone to washing. I suppose every other woman on the tow did likewise. The first day on the Hudson is always washing day, for on the second day the boats are in salt water, which sets back a hundred miles up the river. In the brighter spells between showers, clothes-lines had been hoisted on the decks and a few garments swung on them; but with the first streak of sunshine after the thunder-storm,

Visiting

tubs were brought up to the open air, the clothes-lines filled, and surplus garments were spread all about. The boats with this abounding bunting had quite a gala air.

The men began the day by feeding and caring for the horses in the low stable-cabins at the bow of the boats. The trip back and forth on the Hudson and the stay in New York are the horses' vacation, and in spite of the narrowness of their quarters, they seemed contented enough; yet it moved one's pity to see their galled shoulders and to see them cringe and plunge when the men touched their sores to wash them or rub on oil. Our captain had seven horses. On the canal they worked in two relays, three horses in one and four in the other. The boats kept going night and day, and it was steady work for the horses — six hours on and six hours off for all the week and a half it took to go through the canal. "Their shoulders get very tender," said Duncan. "Some of the horses, after they

have had their rest and start in to work again, will rear and kick, and it's all you can do to make 'em buckle down to pull — they're just that mean in disposition. Still, you can't blame 'em. They're just like folks, and a man with a sore toe would act worse'n they do. You see, their collars are bearing on their shoulders all the time for six hours, and the chafing makes so much heat that, with the sweat, it scalds them. If they could only stop once in a while and have the collars lifted up, so's to let the air under, they'd be all right."

The canal-boat horses undoubtedly have a hard time, and it is the destiny of very many of them to be drowned by being dragged into the water by a fouled tow-line. When boats are passing each other, and the line gets caught, unless it is unsnapped at once, in go the horses. Sometimes the owner will leap into the water to try to cut them loose, but it is dangerous business.

After the men finished caring for the horses, they turned their attention to cleaning the decks, which they said had got "grimmy with dirt and soot." They dipped up great quantities of water and dashed it all about the premises, and then scoured off everything with their brooms. This is a before-breakfast task of daily recurrence. The plentifulness of the water supply seems to give the canal-boat folk the same mania for scrubbing that the Dutch have in Holland. They used it copiously for everything. When a man washed

his face he dipped up a brimming pail for the purpose; and I suppose he would have used another pailful to

Drawing Water

brush his teeth in, only that is an attention to the toilet usually dispensed with on the canal craft.

The general work of the day consisted in doing odd jobs of tinkering, putting things in order, pumping the water out of boats that leaked, mending harness, etc. But there was plenty of leisure, and there was a great deal of lounging and visiting. Hugh and Duncan found time to attend to various affairs of their own, and to read several chapters in some ragged paper novels. Hugh, just before he settled down to reading, invited me to call on him. He had slicked up the cabin where he slept and given its atmosphere an individuality of its own by fumigating it with sulphur for the benefit of the cockroaches. Besides, he had scoured or mopped it out after some fashion, and it was so damp and chilly that he now concluded he would start a fire. He had tried to improve the appearance of his rust-coated stove by going over it with kerosene, and when he kindled the fire its oil-soaked surface began to smoke. In the depressions of the covers intended for the insertion of the stove-handle the kerosene had gathered in little pools, and from these slim tongues of flame leaped up. It was a curious-looking stove, and it sent out a curious-smelling smudge, but Hugh took it calmly. He was a great, stout, hardy fellow, not to be disturbed by trifles. He said he was going to the Klondike in the spring, and already could see himself in his mind's eye picking up the gold "nudgets" there.

About ten o'clock in the morning I had a chance to

find out what a bumboat was. It came from some town on the distant shore — a rude little steamer, not much larger than a good-sized rowboat, peddling vegetables, fruits, butter, milk, and, in the season, ice cream and bottled drinks. It crept up to us piping its infantile whistle, and after fastening itself to the front tier of boats and doing what trading it could, cast loose, and with another announcement of attenuated toots, dropped back to the next tier. Our tow was a little world in itself. These bumboats constituted our only connection with the rest of mankind, and the excitements of the voyage are so few that their visits were always welcome. The bumboats make the tows their chief source of income, but they also do trading along the wharves of their home towns and of villages neighboring.

Each tier of the tow is separated from that in front and behind by six or eight feet of water. The space is spanned by a few strands of rope, but this makes so slight a connection that sociability with neighbors who precede or follow is to a large extent cut off. A man, if he chooses, can put one leg over a rope and hitch himself across the vacancy, but not many attempt this. Our captain was the only one I saw do it. I suppose there was no special danger, but I would prefer to have something else below me than that turmoil of water if I were to follow his example. He had put on a dress coat right after dinner, and crossed the rope, and spent

Two Canal-boat Captains

half the afternoon roosted on a cabin roof talking with Captain Jones, who owned two boats in the tier ahead of us.

Our social intercourse was mostly with the old Frenchman and his wife, who owned the antiquated ice-boat in our tier. Our folks visited with them back and forth by the hour. His strong point was politeness, and hers talkativeness. They did a great deal of scrubbing during the day, and in the afternoon, when there was danger of running short of material to exercise their scrubbing energy on, the wife exhumed a rug of Brussels carpeting and laid it on the cabin roof. The husband looked at her doubtfully out of the corner of his eye when she poured a pail of water over it. Then she rubbed on soap and scoured it with a brush, and next squeezed the water out with a bit of wood. After that she began at the beginning again, with the pouring on of water, and so she continued, as if bent on wearing the rug out. The man saw his roof getting dirty, and mounted it with his broom and swept it almost as assiduously as his wife scoured the carpet. Now and then he would pause and look at her speculatively, as if it was beyond his ken what his wife's real intentions were with regard to that carpet. Once he inquired, mildly, if it wouldn't get dirty again, and she said yes, it would be just as bad as ever in a week. At this the man appeared a shade downcast, but he did not venture to question the wisdom of the labor. His

wife scolded him well from time to time for his clumsiness. He was rather stiff, but he meant well, and I thought she had an exaggerated idea of his incapacity. He had a placating tone and a placating manner, but it was apparently all lost on the woman.

It is not simply adults who live on the tows, but whole families, from babies up to grandmothers; and it seemed to me that, being always on the water, they were subject to peculiar dangers. I asked Duncan about this. It was in one of the morning showers, and he had got a pailful of suds from Mrs. Libbey, and brought it over to our cabin to do some washing. He fixed up a seat, put his dirty garments in the pail, and, after expressing a longing for a wash-board, scrubbed the clothes out on his knuckles. He said Mrs. Libbey was willing enough to wash for him, but he didn't want to be beholden to her. "If she did favors for me, she'd expect me to do 'em for her, and if I shouldn't do 'em, why, she'd chew about it somewhere."

In reply to my question about the canal-boat dangers, he told how, two years before, two girls lost their lives. "They danced overboard," he said. "There was a fiddle playin' on the tier ahead, and they caught hold of each other for a little waltz, and one of them stepped over the side of the boat and she clung to the other, and they both went in and were drownded."

Duncan now got up and put his head out of the hatchway. "Come here a minute," said he.

"You see that long, rocky island we're comin' to with the woods on it? Well, it was right about opposite to that I had a child of mine drownded. I owned a boat in those days, and my wife and three children were on board. There was a bumboat come up alongside the outer boat, and I went to go over to it with one of the children, and my driver he took my little girl, and we were goin' to buy the children some candy; and when the man was steppin' across from one boat to another it must 'a' been the boats pulled apart and he didn't calculate right, and down they went. I never see it happen, and I didn't look around until I heard some one cry there was a man overboard. We got the man out, but my little girl never rose. She must 'a' went in under the boats.

"We couldn't stop the tow, and I got off on the bumboat and stayed behind. It was eight days before we found the body. She'd be seventeen years old now, if she'd lived. That sickened my wife of boating. She was always afraid we'd be losing our other two children; so I sold out and bought a little ten-acre farm. I got six children now, and my wife thinks we better give 'em more education 'n they could get on the canal; and so I earn money summers boating, while she runs the farm with the children, and I guess we'll give 'em some schoolin'. I didn't get much myself. I went on the canal when I was ten, and after I got to boatin' you couldn't dog me off it.

Well, I tell you, I get thirty-five dollars a month and board, and it's a steady job. There ain't many things you could do better in."

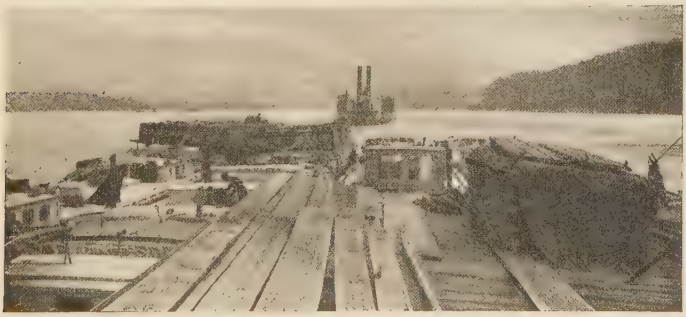
With this he wrung out the pair of trousers he had been at work on and carried them up to the deck and hung them on the swaying rudder-handle.

There was no pause in our voyage. Night and day alike we continued to toil steadily southward. The steamer, dragging us by three sagging tow-ropes, was so far on ahead that no sound came to us from it save when it whistled, but we could see the measured sway of its walking-beam, and we could see the water breaking into foam beneath its paddles, and the smoke drifting away from its tall chimneys.

On the morning of the third day, when I looked out soon after sunrise, I found New York had come into view, dim in the hazy south. We were passing the last of the Palisades, and I regretted to think that during the night we had gone by much of the river's finest scenery. The most impressive view of the trip was one I had had at Storm King the evening before, and I doubt if the whole length of the river affords anything finer. We had passed the twinkling lights of Newburg, and I had gone below to while away the evening, when the captain called to me. I had not thought the Highlands so near, and the sight from the deck was a surprise. The river had narrowed, and, on either hand, a rugged mountain

shouldered up into the sky. The full moon sailed among the clouds, and the great cliffs frowning down on our gloomy line of canal-boats were very striking and powerful.

Through the early voyage the shores were monotonous, and, lower down, where we should have seen the blue ranges of the Catskills, the mists shrouded the distance completely. Frequent residences looked out on us from the wooded banks, and now and then we passed a town. Often a great ice-house would loom up at the water's edge, and on both sides of the river were lines of railroad tracks where the trains at close intervals were speeding along, sending out to us the faint rumble of their wheels and the sharp notes of their whistles. These were the chief land features, while such was the great size of the river itself that though it is a great highway, the craft on it seemed few and far between until we neared New York.



The Steamer dragging the Tow

We had the city in sight at dawn, but the tide was against us, and we were all the morning reaching our destination at its lower end. The sun shone clear and hot, and the glare of the white-painted boats, added to the heat, made the exposed deck rather uncomfortable. Still, there was a fascination about the approach to the city that made it impossible to stay long in the cabins. The multitude of buildings, the shipping that crowded the miles of wharves and filled the wide river with the coming and going of vessels of all sorts and sizes, roused us and kept our interest on tiptoe.

One member of our fleet's company I had seen little of heretofore, but to-day he was much in evidence. This was a young man who was a passenger like myself, only he was wholly penniless and slept under a manger among the horses. There he had dozed away most of the voyage. Hugh said the man was "working" his way to New York, but that must have been metaphor, for I never saw him do anything that looked like labor. The day previous I had learned that he had had nothing to eat since we left Albany, and that moved me to crawl down into his stable-cabin and offer my cookies and can of salmon. He accepted hungrily, and began to eat at once just where he was, under the manger. This last day he showed more spirit, and was out on deck in the sun watching the city with considerable interest. He was a seedy, shiftless-looking fellow. His cloth-

House-cleaning Time

ing was dirty and ragged, his shoes were breaking out, his necktie was frayed, and his felt hat had holes worn through in the creases. He talked with the crew freely, and spoke of himself as a "prodigal son." He said his father was a New York broker and a man of wealth. He could imagine him with his arms open to receive him and ready to put a ring on his finger and kill the fatted calf. "It's more likely, though," he added, "that I'm the fatted calf that'll get killed. Still, I haven't bothered the old gent for over a year now, and he ought to be thankful for that."

There was a general effort on the part of the inhabitants of the tow to make a good appearance in our approach to the metropolis. Clothes-lines were taken in; the rough, everyday working garments were changed for better, and most of the men took pains to shave. When you saw them at their best, they were by no means unattractive.

On the whole, I got an agreeable impression of the canal-boat folk. There was a home air about them that was unexpected. They were hard-working and thrifty, and the drinking habit was the exception rather than the rule. To be sure, the men swore a good deal, even in their ordinary conversation, but they did this with no air of profanity. It was just an oil to the flow of their remarks. In their feeling it apparently made what they said clearer, and themselves more companionable. The women, too, made free with slang and

spiced their remarks with "Gosh," "poor devil," "damn," and even rougher expressions, yet they were not without a certain refinement.

Our captain was probably a fair example of the successful canal-boatman. He had started on the canal as a driver when ten years old. Now, at the age of thirty-five, he owned three boats that were worth on an average $2000 each, and he also owned a fifteen-acre farm. The farm produces hay enough to winter his horses and twenty others, and he values it at $5000. He was sober and hard-working, and it is only such who ever rise to the ownership of boats.

There is a rougher element on the canal. These are the "trippers" — men hired as drivers just for the passage through the canal. They are often hard characters with no more clothes than they wear on their backs, and, as soon as they are paid off, take a vacation and spend all their gains in a spree before they go to work again. "Yes," said Duncan, "soon as the trippers get their money they blow it all right in that same night. Next morning when they're sobering up, they'll do most anything to get some more drink. Why, one feller sold me a pair of rubber boots for a quarter, that he'd paid two-ninety for a few days before, but he said he was 'bliged to have the liquor anyhow."

Most captains take no notice of Sundays, yet there are those who tie up on the Sabbath and go to

church. They will even lose three or four hours of Saturday rather than be where there is no church. But wages go on Sunday the same as week-days, and the average man sees a clear loss of five or six dollars in tying up, and he thinks he can't afford it.

Some of the families winter on their boats lying at the wharves in New York City, and they say they do it very comfortably. Mrs. Libbey told of a friend who tried living in a tenement instead. The family paid eighteen dollars a month rent, and it was a crowded, stifling little place, not nearly so good as a canal-boat.

The freighting season lasts from May to December, and in the cold weather the majority of the boat-folk are at their home villages in central New York. They don't work very hard in winter, they said, but just dress well and have a good time. The women, in particular, enjoy the winter. "The summer," said Hugh, "is all rain for them, but the winter is all sunshine."

The men mostly marry girls brought up on the canal, and when they do pick out a girl unused to the boating environment they are apt to find they made a mistake, for she usually is not fitted for the life and "can't get to like it."

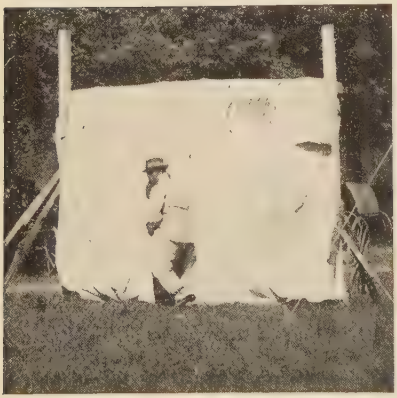
Noon came, and we had arrived opposite the picturesque jumble of lofty buildings at the lower end of the city. A little later we were making fast to a pier down near the Battery, and I prepared to leave. Personally, I

had received only kindness and hospitality on the trip, and the voyage had held so much that was novel and interesting that it was with real regret that I left the canal-boats and became an ordinary landsman once more.

Arriving in New York

XIII

THE AUTUMN CATTLE SHOW



The "Nigger" Target

IN New England's purely farming districts the cattle show is the one event of the year that attains to genuine greatness. It is in such districts you see it at its best — a rural picnic that draws to it the people of all the countryside. The towns and villages roundabout are depopulated. I am not sure that the ministers go, but the church elders are on hand with their fat cattle and all the varied farm belongings in which they take pride; and so are their wives and daughters and other members of the family, even to the hired man.

It is the social element which gives the fair its most vital attraction. The people come not so much because

of the races, the exhibits, and the pleasure-making contrivances, as because of the certainty of meeting all their friends and acquaintances. In the two days of the show they pick up more news than they would in months of ordinary days. "I ain't seen you sence the cattle show last year," you will hear one woman say to another. "Why don't you come and make me a call once in a while? It ain't but eight miles." And when the preliminary whys and wherefores have been settled to mutual satisfaction they fall to detailing the happenings of the past twelve months, lingering with especial minuteness over the ravages of death and disease.

Perhaps there is no better place to see the country fair than at Cummington, in western Massachusetts, a town that possesses the double distinction of having the cattle-show grounds of the district, and of being the birthplace of William Cullen Bryant. It lies among the tumbled hills which abound in that part of the state, and is far from railroads and large centres of population. The region for many miles around is one of scattered farms and little villages. Probably no town tributary to the fair contains much over one thousand inhabitants, and some fall a good deal short of that number.

The fair is held the last of September. Autumn comes early on the hills. All the corn is cut and stacked in the fields. Nature's year's work is about

finished. Nearly all the banditti weeds and flowering plants of field and wood are weighted with seeds, or the seeds have flown and only empty husks remain.

The road by which I approached the fair-grounds led much of the way through the woodlands, orange and yellow with turning leafage. Dwellings were few and far between, and it was nothing unusual to drive for miles without seeing aught more closely related to a human habitation than a lonely gray sugar-house in a patch of rock maples. Sometimes a squirrel chattered at me, sometimes a crow flapped into view overhead, gave a disturbed caw or two, and hastened away, and once I roused a partridge that disappeared with a startled whir of wings. But as a whole the woods were very quiet. The last few miles of the way I did not lack company. There were teams before and teams behind — a long string of them climbing the final hill, bumping over the "thank-you-marms" and rattling across, one after the other, the frequent little wooden bridges that spanned the rivulets the road encountered. Most of them were family teams of two or three seats, but there were many top buggies cleaned up for the occasion, each holding "a fellow and his girl." Then there were the confirmed old bachelors, who rode alone; and there was the more pronounced jockey element represented by men who usually brought along a single male companion. As I neared the grounds I began to see teams hitched

to the trees along the roadside. The owners were careful not to leave anything of value in their vehicles, and every man who had a whip that was worth stealing insured its safety by taking it along with him. Whenever and wherever you met him later in the day you would find him with the whip in his hands.

The grounds with their one-third of a mile race-course lay in an elevated hollow of the hills that seemed to be the only spot in the region sufficiently level to lay out such a track. Immediately surrounding were either rough depressions or rocky ridges, and some of this wild land was inside of the high board fence that engirdled the fair-grounds.

By paying a little extra one was privileged to drive his team through the entrance gate and keep it on the grounds all day if he chose. A favorite resort of vehicles was a grassy hill that rose within the circle of the race-course. Here the wagons were left while the horses were led away to be hitched elsewhere.

If you arrived after things got well going, you struck pandemonium the moment you passed through the wide wooden gates. "Fakirs" and travelling tradesmen had been coming by every road all the day before, and the centre of the grounds was now full of booths and tents, with an intermingling of peddling wagons and stands and amusement paraphernalia. The place was a great human beehive. Those who had come to make money strove to attract trade by continual

shouting, and a brass band played enlivening strains at frequent intervals, while the crowd itself was in constant motion, and there was a never ceasing undertone of voices talking, calling, and laughing. It was a motley throng, including people of every age, from babies and toddlers up to nonagenarians. Many of the folk were dressed tastefully and in modern styles, but others, by reason of carelessness or isolation or poverty, wore garments that were very antiquated. Then, too, there seemed to be a curious difference of opinion as to whether winter or summer apparel was the more appropriate.

Children Sightseers

Some of the attendants were strange-looking people, suggestive of caricature — raw, long-haired boys, gnarled men with quaintly trimmed beards, and faded women, the lines and expressions of whose faces

brought up before one visions of olden times. On the other hand, there were present more or less city folk, to whom a rural jollification of this sort was a very real pleasure. Another class of outsiders was that of the gentry politicians of the county, who had come to pull wires in anticipation of the approaching election, and to pose in the eyes of the public as genial good fellows.

Wherever the crowd gathered thickest there hovered peddlers of pop-corn, peanuts, grapes, peaches, and five-cent cigars — the standard price at cattle shows. There, too, you found the man with the bunch of colored balloons. While in his hands they pulled jauntily skyward, but once transferred to the children they were very apt to soon burst or droop to earth. The itinerant hawker and distributor of happiness who seemed to be most successful was one who carried little striped whips, and squeaky whistles with rubber sacks on the end. "Catbags" was the expressive name of these whistles. You blew and distended the rubber, then took it away from your mouth, and the thing emitted a long, wailing piping quite enchanting to the ears of childhood; but to older people the noise was rather distracting after it had been heard continuously for a few hours.

Not all the interest was confined to the show grounds. Just outside, near the entrance, was a peculiar gathering of men who were getting all the

fun they could without going in. They were toughs and ne'er-do-wells who drove rusty, ancient vehicles and abused-looking horses, which they were always

Without the Gate

ready to swap or sell. Toward noon, when I went out for a stroll, most of the gang were collected about an old negro. He was sitting in a shaky buggy, and was trying to get an offer for his old white nag. "There ain't a blemish on him," the negro declared, and he cantered his steed down the road to show his paces.

The dickering was long-drawn-out and resultless, and finally the negro said he must go home and get something to eat. As he started off, he remarked: "Well, I can't sell you this horse, gentlemen, an' I can't swap him. Nobody don't want such a horse 'cause he's a poor horse."

Cattle show gets its name from its exhibit of farm creatures, and these, either in pens or tied to lines of railing, occupied an acre or two on the inner borders of the race-course. About them the men gathered in force to discuss the merits of the various animals. Hence, in that vicinity you got a concentrated essence of Yankee smoking, spitting, and dialect such as it would not be easy to match the world over.

The centre of interest for the women was a large, barnlike, two-story hall, the most prominent structure

The Stage from the Neighboring Town

on the grounds. In it were exhibited a thousand and one products of housewifely art and of agricultural success. One section was devoted to flowers from home flower-beds. Some were in pails, some in pots,

and some in cheese-hoops and soap-boxes, and, besides, there were cut flowers in extraordinary bouquets — decorative erections that were certainly ingeniously and fantastically contrived if they were not as beautiful as the designers and constructors believed them to be. A few steps farther on and you were among the fruits and vegetables. Here was a great concourse of plates with fine apples, pears, peaches, or quinces on each. Then there were grapes, plums, strings of onions, heaps of beets, carrots, cabbages, and such things, and a squash calculated to make one gape with wonder at its immensity. Next in order was an exhibit of butter and of cheeses, the latter brown and wrinkled and rather unattractive outwardly, yet at the same time suggestive of a certain ripeness and inner richness. There were pickles and cans of preserves and loaves of bread, all hopeful of prize honors; and, set against the windows to show their color and translucence, were bottles of maple syrup and tumblers of jelly.

The display in the lower room of the hall was distinctively of the fields and kitchen, while that of the room upstairs was as decidedly an exhibition of the arts of the sitting room and parlor. The array of fancy work was such as might rival the show-window of a dry-goods store. Every inch of space on the long tables was full, and many articles were tacked up on the walls or draped over lines as if hung up to dry indoors after a rainy Monday's wash. Patchwork

quilts were favorites for demonstrating a woman's prowess with the needle and taste in making combinations. Some of them contained so vast a number of tiny pieces it made one weary just to look at them and think of the labor involved. Yet therein lay their merit. Such a quilt is a monument to the patience and skilful industry of the maker, and as such will be a source of pleasure to her as long as she lives. Quite likely it may be laid away as too good for common use and be handed down in the family as an heirloom. Besides its other excellences it has the virtue of being a record of feminine garments worn by the family and by the family friends — everyday dresses, wedding dresses, baby dresses. The whole gamut of human life is pictured in the texture of the coverlet, and the constructor can probably recognize and give something of the history of each dress and person there represented.

Other favorite articles shown at the cattle show were elaborate rag rugs, sofa pillows, home-knit mittens and stockings, worsted slippers, delicate doilies, and quantities of crocheting. "Mary Stevens done that," said a woman, picking up some of the most intricate of the embroidery and calling her husband's attention to it. "Ain't it remarkable how she can do such a lot with her needle, and she a cripple that can't put her hand up to her head, and not even feed herself!"

I thought the needlework showed a distinct love of

color and prettiness quite independent of utility and fitness; for certainly a good deal of it would be hopelessly out of harmony in the average home. A more satisfactory phase of the exhibit was the housewifely thrift that was apparent in discovering possibilities in odds and ends of waste. Here was the old wearing apparel rejuvenated in the form of rag carpets, rugs, sofa pillows, etc., but the climax in this transformation of household débris was reached in a pretty vase that had acorns, suspender buttons, nails, iron nuts, and other hardware stuck into its yielding surface, and then the whole had been gilded. It was an ingenious use of rubbish, but the result looked like the product of some heathen nation of Africa or South America.

Art pure and simple was represented by a number of hand-painted plates and silk banners and several pictures in oils, water-colors, and pastel. The subjects which the artists chose to depict were usually either flowers or impossibly romantic landscapes. But, though the pictures received their due share of admiration, they did not stir the hearts of most as did the long-houred intricacy of the fancy needlework.

One corner of the upper hall was reserved for a children's department, and here was a six-year-old's loaf of bread occupying a place of honor amid a whole table full of cookery and canned fruits and jellies and pickles, the handiwork of other housekeepers of tender years. The children showed, too, a collection of

small hens' eggs, several plates of fruit, some very big cucumbers and some very little pumpkins, and there were exhibited many child efforts at patchwork, splashers, cushions, and a variety of pufferies and vanities in the needlework line, for which my vocabulary has no names. The shining light among the boy exhibitors was one who showed sixty different kinds of beans of his own raising. If he did not get a half-dollar prize, I do not think the judges did their duty.

The prize committees I saw at work had the air of feeling a due sense of their responsibility, and I suppose they worried out their decisions as fairly as they could, though these were sure to be regarded with critical dissent by the owners of the goods that did not find favor in their eyes. Still, the distinction of being one of the judges to some degree compensated for the grumbling of the dissatisfied — and, besides, the committees felt at liberty to sample freely the more toothsome things that fell under their judicial care, so that in certain cases the things judged well-nigh disappeared in the process of having their comparative merits settled.

The exercises on the race-course began at eleven o'clock with a "Grand Cavalcade of Oxen." Oxen have largely given way to horses on the New England farms, but there are still plenty of them among the hills, and the cavalcade was impressively long and slow and sedate, except for a couple of little steers at the end of the procession who did not agree with the boy

in charge of them as to where and how they should go. They kept the lad in turmoil all through the march, and put him to shame before the multitude. A touch of humor was given to the sober trail of the oxen by a long-legged farmer who rode astride of one of the creatures. Another man, known to every one as "Cephas," furnished merriment by riding in one of the ox-carts and playing a little organ with a crank. As Cephas was rigged up like a true clown in an outlandish costume of all the colors of the rainbow, this was a very popular feature of the parade.

The Cavalcade of Oxen

By the time the cavalcade of oxen had gone the rounds it was noon, and thought turned dinnerward. Some resorted to the eating tents, but the large majority went to their wagons and resurrected from under the seats various boxes, baskets, tin cans, and bottles,

and made preparations for an open-air feast. The food was generous in quantity, and it had a holiday flavor in that there was coffee for children and all, and the cake had frosting on it. To be sure the coffee was cold, and one drinking cup did for several of the picnickers, and the pie had caved in, but accidents and shortcomings are null and void on such an occasion. Often relatives who lived in different parts of the home town or the county got together for dinner and the victuals of both parties were passed about indiscriminately. This added to the interest, especially to the investigating minds of the children. Even the grown people showed a joking preference for a change from the home cooking.

Immediately after dinner the folk began to resort to the "grand stand." This was just across the track from the judges' two-story pagoda, whence these dignitaries viewed the races. The only thing grand about the stand was its name, for it was nothing but a few lines of unplaned plank seats terraced up a hillside. The seats were soon filled, and the overflow accommodated themselves on neighboring stones and hillocks. An old gentleman with a blue sash over his shoulder was cantering up and down on a big black horse, trying to keep the crowd off the race-course. This man was the marshal. "All go across that want tew," he would call out, "but we can't have yew blocking the track."

He and two young fellows who assisted him made

feints of riding down the crowd, but with all their efforts they could not keep the course clear. Several pairs of oxen were making ready to draw a load of stone on a stone-boat, and the crowd was bound to get close up, even if they stopped the whole performance.

On the Grounds

In this they displayed their Yankee independence, or, to use a term that more exactly describes it, their Yankee hoggishness. The men who were the most obstreperous were those who had been drinking. It was a no-license region, but it was not wholly parched for all that, and rumor said you could get "crab-apple bitters" right on the grounds. There was one man

in particular whose uncertain step and swaggering manner and sense of importance showed that he had found recent inspiration to great deeds in the bottle. He would obey no orders, and once when an official's horse crowded on him he caught its bridle and called the rider a hard name. This rider had red hair, and therefore, in the popular estimation, a temper, and he instantly responded by raising a little whip he carried and striking the drunken man square in the face. That made the latter furious, he dropped the bridle, broke into oaths, and would have snatched the orderly out of the saddle had not others restrained him. Gradually he subsided, but for some minutes serious fighting seemed immanent.

"What an ugly craowd there is here!" remarked the man next to me. "They're baon' to git on the track. Some one ought to send the band daown here an' let 'em blow them fellers aout!

"I wisht they'd quit their foolin' and begin," the man continued, after a pause. "This stun I'm settin' on ain't gettin' any softer. If I don't bring a seat with me tomorrer then I'm a liar."

But now the oxen were drawing. They only dragged the stone-boat a few feet, but it made the great creatures pant and twist painfully. The contest was between two yokes, and after the first had been successful in its effort the second tried it. They, too, succeeded, and then more stone was added. So the trials went

To Buy or Not to Buy

on, and the stones were piled higher till one pair or the other found the load beyond its strength to move. It seemed like cruel work, yet the friend at my elbow, regarding the final struggles of the champions, imperturbably said, "They handle it pretty good naow, but I don't see haow any farmer can work with cattle — they're so blame slow. We ain't had none on our place sence I was a boy."

Some of the oxen were presently attached to carts and driven about to show their training, and one of the drivers got up in his cart and invited the lookers-on to ride with him. "Don't stan' there star-gazin'," he called out, "when you got a chance to ride with a good-lookin' man." So a dozen chaffing young fellows clambered into the cart and sat around on the edges, and took a turn or two up and down the track.

Later in the afternoon there was an exhibition of horses and colts, and the day ended with a bicycle race.

The second day of the fair was distinguished from the first by being called "the horse show." There were frequent trotting matches on the race-course, both morning and afternoon, and the crowd was even larger than on the day previous. All the fakirs were on hand, and the uniformed brass band furnished enlivenment with its bursts of music. In short, there was for the pleasure-seekers all the din and dust and

turmoil that contribute to make the occasion notable and interesting in its strong contrast to the country quiet and repose of the rest of the year.

The races were not professional, and were the more attractive on that account. We were not watching a contest between mere racing-machines, and every driver and horse had a readily perceived character of their own. The two races which overtopped all others in the interest aroused were the two which were most picturesque and amateurish. In the first a woman drove in the class set down on the programme as "Carriage Horses." She was a pleasing, modest-looking little person, with a fur muffler about her neck. The sympathies of the onlookers were hers from the beginning, and she drove in such a steady, determined way that, though her horse was not in first it never made a break, and she did the neatest driving of any of the contestants. Everybody cheered when the judges fastened the blue card to her horse that meant she had taken the first prize.

The other race was open only to lads under fifteen and misses under twenty, and was designed more to show the deftness and capacities of the drivers than the mettle of their steeds. There were three entries, a dark-haired girl, stout and tanned, her poverty evidenced by a hat three or four years out of date; a light-haired girl much more ladyfied and smartly dressed than the other; and a freckle-faced boy.

None of them had much to boast of in the way of a horse, but as it was to be an exhibition of skill rather than speed, the looks of the animals did not much matter. They lined up before the judges' stand, and at a given signal they all jumped from their buggies, hastily unhitched their horses and took off the harnesses. Then they as hastily restored the harnesses and put the horses into the shafts again. All three were nervous and excited, and their feelings were shared to a considerable extent by the people intently watching them.

Now the light-haired girl was through and leaped into her buggy and was off. The boy was only an instant behind, and it looked as if the dark-haired girl who started last had no chance. Round the course they went, and on the second circuit, which was the final and decisive one, it was seen that the dark-haired girl was gaining. Near the close she was about to pass her rivals when they laid on their whips and their steeds broke into a gallop and left her to come in belated and alone. The judges had already descended from their elevated stand to look into the manner in which the three had accomplished their harnessing. Only the dark-haired girl had done this perfectly. The other two had slighted details in their haste, and on the course they had not kept their horses in good control. The first prize escaped them, and the light-haired girl, who had felt sure of it and had decided

just how she would spend the money, wept with the bitterness of the disappointment.

The crowds looking on at the races kept fluctuating — people were coming and people were going all the time, for no one cared to spend a whole day on any single feature of the fair, however fascinating. Everybody had brought a supply of spare cash, which must be spent, and, particularly in the children's case, this money burned in their pockets until it was gone. There was some regret at parting with the last of it, and yet a certain satisfaction in having the matter settled and completed.

For the hungry there were dining tents set with long tables, and having at the rear improvised open-air kitchens. Eating resorts of a humbler sort were the booths where you could get a quick lunch of rolls and "Frankfort sausages — Coney Island style," and walk off with the repast in your hand. The "Coney Island style" was always emphasized by the vendors, and it was clear they thought it added vastly to the attraction.

Then there were booths which made a specialty of candies, fruits, and beautifully tinted cold drinks, set forth seductively in large, clear glasses. Colored drinks apparently sold better than uncolored. A man would perhaps not pay any more for pink lemonade than for plain, but he would buy it quicker and feel he was getting more for his money.

Cooking Apparatus at the Rear of the Eating Tents

All the vendors were shouters and spared no effort in vociferating the merits of their very desirable wares, but the man who made the most noise was a whip merchant. He stood in the tail of his wagon with his stock in trade in a rack at his side, while down below was a post about which he was continually snapping the whips to show how good they were.

"There," says he, "is a whip you couldn't buy in the stores for less 'n a dollar and a quarter [snap, snap, snap], and, gents, I'm goin' to let you have it for seventy-five cents [snap, snap]. There's good timber in that whip. See — you can bend it like the old Harry! Seventy-five cents! Gosh, it's terrible, cut-

tin' the price that way, but I can't be here doin' nothin', so I offer inducements [snap, snap]. Grandpa [pointing to an elderly man who is fumbling in his trousers pocket], you're goin' to take this whip, ain't you?"

The old man shakes his head, and instead of money extracts a generous bandana handkerchief and blows his nose. This was a disappointment to the whip man, but he promptly took up the thread of his discourse and said: "Well, boys, now I'll tell you what I'll do. Here's a little red bird [picks up a whip with a strip of red on the handle] and here's a little yellow bird. Now I'll put them with the seventy-five center, and one dollar takes 'em all."

So he keeps on till some one buys, and then he says he will make up a lot of six. "Here they be," he calls out. "No, there ain't but five! I'm gettin' cross-eyed so I can't count. Well, there's another. Now I'm goin' to let you have the whole six for a dollar. You can't afford to go out and cut a stick when you c'n buy 'em like that;" and, between his eloquence and the merits (somewhat uncertain) of his whips, he found purchasers in plenty.

There were several shooting galleries on the grounds, and their popularity was attested by the constant pop of rifles and by the ringing of bells which sounded automatically whenever a bull's-eye was hit. A still more popular amusement, and one that had an almost

THE POUNDING MACHINE

uninterrupted run of custom, was a merry-go-round. A hand-organ furnished music, and two stout, sweating men provided power, and the little painted horses spun around the circle very gayly.

Not far from the merry-go-round was a pounding-machine. You gave a blow with a heavy wooden beetle, and a marker slid up a tall pole to show the weight of your stroke. "Well, well," shouts the fellow in charge, "who's the next man? Come, gents, try your strength. Well, well, it's fun — only costs you half a dime, and you find out just how much the correct weight of every blow is. Have a try, gents. You'll be sorry if you don't. You'll go home and hear your comrades tell what they can do, but you can't tell what you can do without telling a lie. I'd tell one hundred lies for a nickel, but I don't believe you would."

One of the tents was a photograph gallery, where you could get your tintype taken for twenty-five cents. "Right this way," the rowdy-looking proprietor was shouting from the door, "we're on earth big as life and twice as natural."

His next neighbor was expatiating on the unparalleled charms of "Conkey's Great Mechanical World — perfect working figures — constantly in motion — free to all — we don't ask for money — just walk right in, ladies and gentlemen, and pay ten cents when you come out if you are satisfied — if you are not satisfied don't pay anything."

Such as succumbed to this enticement found that the tent contained a platform on which were a number of miniature buildings and people made to represent a real village, while for a background there was a painted canvas depicting a fine assortment of blue cliffs, waterfalls, green fields, villas, and distant towns. But one's attention was chiefly absorbed by the busy inhabitants of the hamlet. They seemed rather rheumatic and stiff in the joints, yet there was not a single idler in the whole lot. The chief mansion of the place was undergoing repairs, and a Lilliputian man sat on the peak of the roof shingling, a mason was everlastingly putting the final bricks on the chimney, and a painter was at work on a balcony. In the yard below was a man mixing mortar, and three carpenters at a bench were nailing, sawing, and planing. A woman churning on the piazza and another woman at the well drawing water represented the domestic side of the home. In other parts of the village were a blacksmith's shop, before which a horse was being shod, a sawmill going full blast, and a railroad station with the officials all attending to business. Every thirty seconds a train rushed through the hamlet. It came from a hole at the left and disappeared into a hole at the right, labelled "Hoosac Tunnel." I paid ten cents when I went out.

Another chance for amusement was furnished by a man with a blacked face and clothing stuffed out

ponderously with hay. He stood at the farther end of a little fenced-off space, and let any man throw three balls at him who would pay five cents for the privilege. If you hit him, you could have a cigar.

One booth that was much patronized was known as the "fish-pond." In its open front was set a shallow tank of water, wherein were floating many little slips of wood, or "fish," each bearing a concealed number. On the walls of the booth were all the articles it was possible to draw numbered to correspond with the fish in the tank — and there were no blanks, the proprietor said. Every one got his money's worth and you might draw the grand prize — a pistol or a gold watch. Most of the articles were valueless trinkets, but among the rest hung the pistol and the gold watch, with naught between you and possession save a lucky ten-cent piece, and many a dime was staked fruitlessly on the will-o'-the-wisp chance.

All things have an end, and cattle show is no exception. As the afternoon of the second day waned and the exercises on the race-course were drawing to a close a growing restiveness was manifest in the crowd. The chill of the autumn evening was coming on and dispersion began about four o'clock. The vendors of perishable fruits and eatables dropped their prices, and the work of taking down the tents and booths and packing up commenced, a tinge of forlornness and desolation crept into the scene and the fun was over. Peo-

ple were in a hurry to depart, yet they were not in such haste as to neglect to drive around the race-course before they went out the gate. This spin on the track adds a final touch of completeness to the occasion, as no man who has any pride in his team neglects to make the circuit at least once.

So ends the cattle show, though its memories with the meeting of friends, the excitement, the half-dozen whips for a dollar, the many circulars gathered free, and a colored advertising yardstick, not to mention the children's catbags, last a long way toward the fair of next year.

Five Cents a Throw at the Dolls

XIV

CAPE COD FOLKS

A Village Sign

IT was densely dark when I arrived at Yarmouth one October evening. Viewed from the platform of the railway station the world about was a void of inky gloom.

"If you're lookin' for the town," said a man at my elbow, "you'll find it over in that direction;" and he pointed with his finger. "You follow the road and turn to the right when you've gone half a mile or so, and that'll take you straight into the village."

"But I don't see any road," said I.

"Well, it goes around the corner of that little shed over thar that the light from the depot shines on."

"And how far is it to a hotel?"

"We ain't got no hotel in this place; but Mr. Sutton, two houses beyond the post-office, he keeps people, and I guess he'll take you in all right."

I trudged off along the vague highway, and at length reached the town street, a narrow thoroughfare solidly overarched by trees. Dwellings were numerous on either side, and lights glowed through curtained windows. How snug those silent houses looked; and how cheerless seemed the outer darkness and the empty street to the homeless stranger! I lost no time in hunting up Mr. Sutton's, and the shelter he granted brought a very welcome sense of relief.

When I explored Yarmouth the next day I found it the most attenuated town I had ever seen. The houses nearly all elbowed each other for a distance of two or three miles close along a single slender roadway. Very few dwellings ventured aside from this double column. Apparently no other situation was orthodox, and I suppose the familes which lived off from this one street must have sacrificed their social standing in so doing.

Yarmouth was settled in 1639 and is the oldest town on the Cape. Its inhabitants in the past have been famous seafaring folk, and fifty years ago almost every other house was the domicile of a retired sea-captain, and in the days of the sailing vessels the Yarmouth men voyaged the world over. A certain class

of them went before the mast, but the majority were ship's officers. A goodly number of the latter amassed wealth in the India and China trade. This wealth has descended in many instances still intact to the generation of to-day, and accounts for the town's air of easy-going comfort. Fortunes, however, are no more drawn from the old source, and at present the ambitious youth who aspires to riches turns his eyes cityward. The sea has ceased to promise a bonanza. Even the local fishing industry is wholly dead, though it is only a few decades since the town had quite a mackerel fleet; but the little craft are all gone now, and nothing remains of the old wharves save some straggling lines of black and broken piles reaching out across the broad marshes that lie between the long street and the salt water.

These marshes are of rather more economic importance to modern Yarmouth than the sea itself; for grass and rank sedges cover them and furnish a considerable proportion of the hay that is harvested. I liked to loiter on their wet levels and watch the men swing their scythes. I noticed that they left untouched the coarse grass that grew on the strips of sand. "That's beach grass," said one of the mowers with whom I talked. "The stock won't eat that, nor any other creatures won't eat it that I know of except skunks. Thar's plenty of them chaps along the shore on these ma'shes, and me 'n' my dog kitch a lot of 'em here every winter."

The route back to the town from the marsh on which this skunk hunter was at work led across a low ridge of stony pasture-land where the blackberry vines displayed their ruddy autumn foliage and brightened the earth like flashes of flame. A most beautiful little lane threaded along the crest of the ridge. It was only

Anchoring his Haystacks

about a dozen feet broad and was hemmed in by stone walls overgrown with bushes, among which rose an occasional tree. The paths trodden by the cows' hoofs in the turf of the lane wandered irregularly along, avoiding obstructions, and, as a rule, following the line of the least resistance. There was, however, now and

then, a deflection, which the cattle had made purposely toward the thickest of the bordering brush, intent on crowding up against the twigs to rid themselves of flies. How shadowy and protected and pastoral the lane was! I envied the boys who drove the cows and thus had the chances to make a daily renewed acquaintance with its arboreal seclusion.

Not far from where the lane emerged on the village street stood a dwelling that I looked at with interest every time I passed. It was a low and primitive structure, and behind it was a little barn surmounted by a swordfish weather vane. Swordfish or ships, I observed, were the favorite vanes everywhere for Cape Cod outbuildings. The attraction of this home, with its curious air of repose under the shadowing trees, grew until one day I ventured into the yard. Near the barn a gray-bearded ancient had just hitched a venerable horse into a wagon, and was preparing to grease the vehicle's wheels. I spoke with him, and after some preliminaries said, "It appears to me you have about the oldest house in town."

He gave me a sudden look of surprise out of the corner of his eyes, the purport of which I did not at the moment understand, and then went on with his work. "Ye-ye-yes," he replied, in his hasty, stammering way; for his thoughts seemed to start ahead of his tongue and the latter gained control with difficulty. "Ye-ye-yes, he is old, but he's a good hoss yit!"

"Oh, I didn't say horse," I remarked quickly. "I was speaking of your house."

"My h-h-h-h-house, hm-m-m! That — that's one of the old settlers. Must be two hundred year old; and do you see that pear tree thar with the piece of zinc nailed over the bad place in the trunk, and the iron bands around up where the branches begin, so't they won't split off? I s'pose that pear tree's as old as the house."

"What kind is it?"

"It-it-it-it's wha-what we call the old-fashioned button pear. Uncle Peter Thacher that had this place years ago used to pick up the pears and sell 'em to the boys for a cent apiece. They ain't much larger'n wa'nuts. They're kind of a mealy kind of a pear, you know — very good when they first drop off, but they rot pretty quick."

The man had finished applying the wheel grease now, and he clambered into the wagon and drove off, while I walked on. I passed entirely through the village into a half-wild region beyond, where much of the land was covered by a dense pine wood. There were occasional farm clearings; but I noticed that the houses of this outlying district were generally vacant. Opposite one of the deserted homes was a corn-field that attracted my attention because the tops of the corn stalks had been cut off and carted away, and the ears left on the stubs to ripen. This was a common

An Autumn Corn-field

The tops of the stalks have been cut off for fodder

way of treating corn years ago, but is seldom seen now. Here and there in the field were scarecrows — sometimes an old coat and hat hoisted on a stake; sometimes a pole with a fluttering rag at the top, and,

suspended a little lower down on the same pole, a couple of rusty tin cans that rattled together dubiously in the breeze. As I was leaning over the roadside wall contemplating this corn-field a man came along and accosted me, and I improved the opportunity to ask him why so many of the houses of the neighborhood were unoccupied.

"Wal," said he, "people don't like to live outside o' the villages nowadays. Sence the fishin' give out, the young folks all go off to get work, and they settle somewhar else, and the old folks move into the towns. In this house across the road, though, an old woman lived, and she died thar two years ago. She was kind o' queer, and some say she wa'n't a woman at all. She wore women's clothes, but she had a beard and shaved every mornin', and her hair was cut short, and she carried on the farm and did the work just like a man."

My acquaintance spit meditatively and then inquired, "Have you seen Hog Island?"

"No," I responded.

"You'd ought to. It ain't fur from tother end of Yarmouth village. You go down the lane along the crick thar and ask the way of Jimmy Holton that lives by the bridge. He'll tell you. It ain't really an island, but a bunch o' trees in a little ma'sh, and they grow so't if you see 'em from the right place they look just like a hog — snout, tail, and all."

The man had in his hand a large scoop with a row of long wooden teeth projecting from its base. This is the kind of implement used in gathering most of the Cape Cod cranberries, and the man was on his way to a berry patch he cultivated in a boggy hollow, not far distant. I accompanied him and found his wife and children on their knees, each armed with a scoop with which they were industriously scratching through the low mat of vines. Where they had not yet picked, the little vines were twinkled all over with ripe berries — genuine autumn fruit, waxen-skinned, ruddy-hued, and acid to the tongue — as if the atmospheric tartness and coolness had helped the sun to dye and flavor them.

A Cranberry Picker

The bog was not at all wild. In preparing it for cranberry culture, it had been thoroughly tamed.

Brush and stumps had been cleared off and the turf removed. Then it had been levelled and coated with a layer of sand. It was encompassed and more or less cut across by ditches; and, in the process of clearing, steep banks had been heaved up around the borders.

Harvest on a Cranberry Bog

"Cranberries are a great thing for the Cape," said my friend. "They're the best crop we have, but it's only late years we've gone into 'em. When I was a boy, the only cranberries we used to have was a little sort that growed in the bogs wild; and we never thought nothin' o' dreanin' the ma'shes and goin' into the business the way we do now.

"My bog ain't fust class. A man's got to put a

lot o' work into raisin' cranberries to do the thing just right, and when you only got a small bog you kind o' neglectify it. There's one bog about a mile from here that's got sixteen acres in it, and they're always tendin' to it in one way and another the year around. They keep it clear of weeds, and if there's any sign of fire-bug they steep tobacco and spray the vines. If there's a dry spell they rise the water, though that don't do as much good as it might. You c'n water a plant all you want to, but waterin' won't take the place o' rain.

"Pretty soon after we finish pickin' we flood the bogs and they stay flooded all winter, if the mushrats don't dig through the banks. The water keeps the plants from freezin' and seems to kind o' fertilize them at the same time. The ponds make grand skatin' places. They freeze over solid — no weak spots — and they ain't deep enough to be dangerous, even if you was to break through."

This man's statement as to the importance of cranberry culture to the dwellers on the Cape was in nowise exaggerated. When I continued my journeyings later to the far end of the peninsula I saw reclaimed berry bogs innumerable. There was scarcely a swampy depression anywhere but that had been ditched and diked and the body of it laid off as smooth as a floor and planted to cranberries. The pickers were hard at work — only two or three of them on some bogs, on others a motley score or more. It seemed as if the

task engaged the entire population irrespective of age and sex; and the picking scenes were greatly brightened by the presence of the women in their calico gowns and sunbonnets or broad-brimmed straw hats. Often the bogs were far enough from home, so that the workers carried their dinners and made the labor an all-day picnic, though I thought the crouching position must grow rather wearisome after a time.

Aside from the fertile and productive bogs the aspect of the Cape was apt to be monotonous and sombre. The cultivated fields appeared meagre and unthrifty, the pastures were thin-grassed and growing up to brush, and, more predominant than anything else in the landscape, were the great tracts of scrubby woodland, covered with dwarfed pines and oaks, often fire-ravaged, and never a tree in them of respectable size. Ponds and lakes were frequent. So were the inlets from the sea with their borderings of salt marsh; indeed, the raggedness of the shore line was suggestive of a constant struggle between the ocean and the continent for the possession of this slender outreach of the New England coast. The buffeting of the fierce sea winds was evident in the upheave of the sand dunes and the landward tilt of the exposed trees — trees that had a very human look of fear, and seemed to be trying to flee from the persecuting gales, but to be retarded by laggard feet.

At the jumping-off tip of the Cape is Provincetown.

In Provincetown

snugged along the shore, with steep protecting hills at its back. It is a town that has an ancient old-world look due to its narrow streets, with houses and stores and little shops crowded close along the walks. It is a fishy place, odorous of the sea, and the waterside is lined with gray fish-shanties and storehouses. Many spindle-legged wharves reach out across the beach, and there are dories and small sailing-craft in and about the harbor, and always a number of schooners, and occasionally a larger vessel.

The inhabitants love the sea or else are involuntarily fascinated by it. They delight to loiter on the wharves and beach, and to sit and look out on old ocean's wrinkled surface and contemplate its hazy mystery. One would fancy they thought it replete with beneficent possibilities, and that they were willing lingerers dreamily expecting something fortunate or fateful would heave into view from beyond the dim horizon. The children seek the beach as assiduously as their elders. It is their playground, their newspaper. They poke about the wharves strewn with barrels and boxes, spars, chains, ropes, anchors, etc.; they find treasures in the litter that gathers on the sands; they dig clams on the mud-flats; they race and tumble, and they learn all that is going on in the shipping.

The most exciting event while I was in town was an unexpected catch of squids in the harbor. Squids

are the favorite bait of the cod fishermen, but at Provincetown there is rarely a chance to get this bait so late in the year. The squids sought the deepest portion of the bay, and a little fleet of small boats collected above and captured them by the barrelful. One midday I stood watching the boats from a wharf. Two men who had come onto the wharf soon after I did were regarding the scene from near by. "It's queer how them squids hang in that deep hole thar," said one of the men.

"They bring a good price for cod bait, I believe," said I.

"Yes, Willie Scott, that lives next door to me, he made seven dollars this morning and has gone out ag'in. I'll bet his eyes are full of squid juice this minute. The squids don't trouble much that way, but they'll flip up a smeller (that's what we call their arms) and give you a dose once in a while, spite of all you can do. It makes your eyes sting, but the sting don't last long."

"How large are these squids?" I asked.

"Oh, they're small — not much more'n a foot and a half, smellers and all."

The other man now spoke. He was short and dark, had rings in his ears, and his accent was decidedly foreign. "Cap'n Benson," said he, to his companion, "I seen the butt end of a squid smeller big as this barrel what I'm settin' on."

Cap'n Benson puffed a few times judiciously at his pipe. "Yes," he acknowledged presently, "there's a good many kinds of squids, and they do kitch 'em large enough so one'll last a cod schooner for bait a whole v'yage. We only get a little kind here."

Looking over the Cod Lines

The wharf we were on was nearly covered with racks on which a great quantity of salted codfish had been spread to dry, and Cap'n Benson informed me there was plenty more fish awaiting curing in the hold of a slender-masted vessel that lay alongside the wharf.

"She's a Grand-Banker — this schooner is that brought these fish," he continued. "We ain't got but six Grand-Bankers now, and only fifteen fresh

fishermen. The fresh fishermen, you know, don't go farther'n the Georges and the West Banks. Forty years ago we had two hundred fishing schooners owned here, and we had sixty-seven whale ships where now we got only three. Provincetown is played out. This mornin' me and this man with me didn't have but one hour's work, and we won't have over two hours this afternoon. How you goin' to make a livin' at twenty cents an hour with things goin' on that way? Forty years ago you couldn't get enough men at three dollars and a half a day."

The man with the ear-rings had picked up a piece of shell and was attempting to drop it from the height of his shoulder through a crack in the wharf. He failed to accomplish his purpose though he tried again and again.

"Mr. Klunn, if you want to drop that shell through thar, just mention the minister," advised Cap'n Benson.

He had hardly spoken when Mr. Klunn let the shell fall, and it slipped straight through the crack. "I godfrey!" exclaimed the Cap'n, "I did it for you. I never known that to fail. When I been whaling, and we was cutting up the whale, you couldn't sometimes strike a j'int. You'd try and try and you couldn't strike it, and then you'd stop and say 'Minister!' and it was done already — you'd hit the j'int right off."

"I seen a whale heave up a shark the half as big as a dory," remarked Mr. Klunn, after a pause.

"To be sure," the Cap'n commented. "Howsomever, there's people say a whale can't take in nothin' bigger'n a man's hand; but my idea is that's after he's been eatin' and had all he wanted."

"By gosh! a whale got a swallow so big enough, if he hongry, he swallow a man easy," Mr. Klunn declared. "Some peoples ain't believe about Jonah, but they believe if they seen as much whales that I have."

"I'm thinkin' about them squids," Cap'n Benson said, as he shook his pipe free from ashes and slipped it into the pocket of his jacket. "I guess when the tide comes in to-night, I'll haul out my boat and see if I can't get some of 'em."

"I ain't had no boat since the big storm," observed the man with ear-rings.

"What storm was that?" I inquired.

"It was when the *Portland* went down, in November, 1898," explained Cap'n Benson. "We had an awful time — wharves smashed, boat-houses carried off, and vessels wrecked. It begun to blow in the night. Fust thing I knowed of, it was my chimley comin' down."

"I was sick that time," said the ear-ring man. "The doctor had to give me murphine pills. I was in the bed two, three days, and I lose one hundred and eighty-seven dollar by the storm. You remember that schooner, Cap'n Benson, what the two old mens was drownded on?"

"Oh, I remember — washed overboard out here in the harbor, and the wind took the schooner bang up ag'in a wharf, and the cap'n, he made a jump and landed all right, and he never stopped to look behind to see what become of his vessel nor nobody. He run up into the town and he took the next train for California."

"Yas, that's true," Mr. Klunn affirmed.

Later, while stopping over night at a Truro farm-house, a few miles back on the Cape, I heard more of the great storm. "Thar was three days of it," said my landlady, "startin' on Saturday. It thundered and lightened on Sunday, and it snowed Monday. Everythin' that wa'n't good 'n' strong was blowed down. It blowed the shed off the end of our house, and it blowed a window in upstairs, and it blowed the saddle boards off the roof and some o' the shingles. We had the highest tide we've ever had, and there was places where the sea-water come across the roads. Monday the bodies begun to be washed ashore from the *Portland*, and they kep' comin' in for two weeks."

Truro is a scattered little country place. Its homes dot every protected hollow. The only buildings that seemed independent of the smiting of the winter blasts were the town hall and the Baptist, Methodist, and Catholic churches. These stood in a group on the barest, bleakest hilltop. The churchyards were thick-set with graves, and among the stones grew little tan-

An Old Wharf

gles of sumachs and other bushes, but the sandy height had not a single tree.

On this hill, years ago, stood still another public institution — a windmill. "It sot high up thar, so't

Public Buildings on the Hilltop

it was in sight all over town," said my landlady. "You could see the miller puttin' the sails on the arms, and then when they got to turnin' we'd know which way the wind blowed. But some days there wouldn't be no wind, and the sails might hang there and not turn the whole day long. We used to raise this yaller Injun corn then, a good deal more'n we do now on the Cape, and we raised rye, and we'd take the grain to the windmill to grind. You can't buy no such corn meal or rye meal now as we used to get from that old mill. We e't hasty-pudding them days, and it used

to be so nice! and we had Johnny-cake, and hasty-pudding bread that was made by putting some of the hasty-pudding into flour and mixing 'em up into dough together."

Of the churches on the hill the Catholic was the newest. It was a little shed of a building with a gilt cross surmounting the front gable. The attendants were chiefly Portuguese, the nationality which at present constitutes the great majority of the coast fisher-folk. Most of the fishing is done in rowboats, and the fish are caught in nets fastened to lines of stakes offshore. These fish-traps, as they are called, are visited daily. The crew of a rowboat usually consists of a "Cap'n," who is pretty sure to be a Yankee, and seven men who are likely to be all Portuguese. Truro had four rowboats thus manned. They started out at three in the morning and returned anywhere from noon to eight in the evening.

"It's hard work," explained my landlady, "and the Yankee men don't take up fishin', late years, the way they did. I reckon they c'n make more money farmin'."

I wondered at this. The sandy soil did not look productive, and yet the houses as a rule were painted and in good repair, and conveyed a pleasing impression of prosperity The people with whom I talked seemed to be satisfied. "We git good crops," said a farmer I questioned about agricultural affairs. "We

A Cape Cod Roadway

c'n raise most all kinds o' vegetables in the hollers, and good grass, too, though our heaviest crops o' grass we git off'n the ma'shes. The cows like salt hay fully as well as they do fresh hay, and they like sedge best of all, because it's sweet; but you have to be careful about feedin' 'em too much of that or the milk'll taste. Of course we got plenty o' pasture on the higher ground and plenty o' timber sich as 'tis. The trees don't flourish, though, and you won't find many that are much bigger'n your leg. This is a great country for wild berries — blueberries, blackberries, and huckleberries. Our Portuguese here — land! they git half their livin' in the woods. Besides

berries there's beach plums and wild cherries. But the cherries we don't use for common eatin'. We put 'em up in molasses, and they kind o' work and are good to take for the stomach and the like o' that."

I climbed over the hills round about Truro and tramped the sandy, deeply rutted roads faithfully. It was weary work to one used to solid earth. Such lagging progress! I could never get a good grip with my feet, and slipped a little backward every time I took a step forward. Except along the watercourses nature's growths never attained the least exuberance. The grass on the slopes and uplands was very thin, and with the waning of the season much of it had become wispy and withered. It was mingled with goldenrod and asters that hugged the earth on such short, stunted stems as to be hardly recognizable.

The landscape as viewed from a height had a curiously unstable look. Its form had not been moulded by attrition, but the soil had been blown into vast billows that had the appearance of a troubled sea whose waves were on the point of advancing and overwhelming the habitations and all the green growing things in the vales. Some of the dunes really do advance, and the state has been obliged to make appropriations and devise means for checking their depredations. The work has chiefly been accomplished with the aid of beach grass. This has an affiliation for sand, and you can stick one of its coarse,

wiry tufts in anywhere and it will grow. It only needs to be methodically planted, and the shifting dunes are fast bound and the winds assail them in vain.

Some of the characteristics of this beach grass seemed also to be characteristics of the people of the Cape. They have the same hardiness and endurance, and, like the beach grass, have adapted themselves to their environment and thrive where most would fail. With its omnipresent sand and dwarf woods, the Cape, as I saw it at the fag end of the year, appeared rather dreary, but the prosperous look of the homes was very cheering. These are nearly all owned free from debt, and that nightmare of the agriculturists in so many parts of New England — a mortgage — is happily almost unknown among the Cape Cod folks.

The Mowers on the Marshes

75 a